



ELISABETH EMPRESS OF AUSTRIA

WALTZING VOLCANO

By

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TO MY SONS NIELS AND FRANCIS.



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ROBERT BURNS.

THE vehicle of human progress ascends slowly a steep, rugged, uphill road. Jolting past dangerous abysses, turning unexpected sharp hairpin bends, it heads through the obscure fog of our future, blindly into the unknown.

The journey goes on without heed to individual happiness, thoughtlessly trampling down generation after generation, splashing through the sufferings of millions. The cart-wheels, greased with oceans of blood and tears, still squeak, often stopping, or even sliding back, when only united and superhuman efforts will get them on the move again, or into the right direction.

The individual is wise to look back sometimes, to re-inspect the short lane through which his life has passed, and measure it against the immense high road of history. This will restore the sense of proportion and give a certain lead for the future.

Our parents were fortunate enough to live in one of those rare, quiet breathing-spaces of destiny. Or, at least, so it seems in retrospect.

But one' or two generations before' their lives began, enormous events were crammed into a short period of fifty years. Those days saw the end of the Holy Roman Empire, the birth of the U.S.A., the French Revolution, the rise and fall of Napoleon's power. At the same time a multitude of stars and comets of the first magnitude sparkled on the firmament of human genius. Rousseau, Voltaire, Diderot, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Burns, Goethe, Hume, Kant, Volta, Faraday, Fulton, Stephenson and Semmelweis are only a few of the men of this epoch, who changed the whole structure of social life and the general outlook.

However, in spite of all radical changes, political planning has always failed, and it seems that humanity is still not mature enough to realise its own interests. Consequently, time after time tragic situations arise in which wicked despots, insane power-maniacs, or reckless, irresponsible egoists become the masters, undoing what others have constructed.

Again and again wars have been fought under "but even the pretext " war to end all wars " co

the transformation which is necessary to restore a lasting peace to our troubled race.

The individual can do little in this respect, except search his own heart and share the experiences of a lifetime with his children, teaching them not to repeat the mistakes his generation have made.

I have often found, when sending a telegram from London, Paris, etc., to Budapest, that the telegraph clerk would enquire whether this town was in Austria or Rumania, and when told that it is the capital of Hungary, he would generally murmur, in a condescending undertone: "Isn't it all the same?"

Discussing the battle of Blenheim once with my younger son, I asked him if he knew where this Blenheim was. He replied, after making a sweeping gesture, with slight contempt in his voice: "Oh, somewhere on the Continent."

It has always puzzled me that in an age when aeroplanes and wireless have reduced distances on the earth to insignificance, and optical instruments have opened up new worlds by bringing near far-away stars or disclosing the private life of microbes, we still know so little of each other, especially of peoples almost at our doorstep. It is the perennial attraction of the exotic to which one must attribute the fact that one is often more conversant with the customs of a native tribe in Central Asia than with those of a bordering country.

Strangely enough, even frequent travels have not given men a deeper insight into each other's affairs. The globe-trotter looks at foreign lands, as a rule, through the windows of transcontinental trains, internationally run hotels, or places of entertainment. Should he come into contact with the local population, they show him only the façades of their lives, endeavouring to speak his own language, and often adapting themselves, for the duration of this visit, as far as possible, to the ways of the honoured foreigner.

My English friends frequently ask me if I am not homesick, and would I not like to return to the "old country." As if nostalgia were comparable to a homing pigeon's instinct to get back to a certain geographical point, and not what it is in reality, a longing for something irrecoverable, the craving for days gone by, or for a constellation of people and circumstances which will never occur again. Thither one cannot travel in the flesh; only the spirit may pay short visits sometimes.

It may be pleasant enough to read a few poems or novels in the idiom of one's youth, but it is much more delightful to see our children grow up free and happy, and to hear them speak a language like their mother tongue which we parents can only stammer.

Each people has an individual Nectar and Ambrosia. For one roast beef and Yorkshire pudding, with ale, may be the *ne plus*

ultra of culinary delight, while another dreams of Chianti and macaroni, and a third of Gulyás and Tokay. Traditional dishes as "Granny used to cook them" are quite agreeable, but a better future and sounder prospects for our descendants are of a far greater importance for them and for us.

If we wish to avoid the tragic after-effects of the last world war, a chaos created by a lack of understanding; a deficiency of insight into the psychology of others, by cynicism and contempt, then we have to obviate these shortcomings.

I shall attempt in this volume to further our mutual understanding by explaining to the reader (and also to my children, who, having been brought up in different circumstances, are to some extent strange to their parents), with the help of a simple family chronicle, woven like a thread into the great Gobelin of world history, some reasons for the different mentality and the strange ways of the people in Central Europe, especially the Danubian Basin. This festering wound on the body of Europe, where a collection of many races is united by geographical position and other circumstances into several large groups, which are then split into sub-sections of languages, religious sects, political and other splinters, and divided into strata by great cultural differences, has endangered the peace of Europe, and indirectly the harmony of the world, for hundreds of years.

There are no clear-cut divisions possible, as the races, idioms, religions, and habits intermix and mingle, obliterating boundaries as the paint runs on a crudely coloured map.

On this account no voluntary or forcible foundation of more States, as created after the last war, no self-determination can help, as these expedients do not eliminate minority problems. To stop the bubbling and boiling of this witches' cauldron, filling all Europe with its poisonous vapours, the flames of selfishness and chauvinistic ambition have to be extinguished.

Napoleon said once after his downfall: "I wanted to found a European system, a European code of laws, a European court of appeal. There would have been only one people throughout Europe; it would have become one nation, and any traveller would always be in a common fatherland. . . . Sooner or later this union will be brought about by the force of events. The first impetus has been given; and after the fall and disappearance of my system it seems to me that the only way in which an equilibrium can be achieved in Europe, is through a league of nations."

Joseph II of Habsburg, whose ambitions were less far-flung, wanted to attain the same object within the realm of the Austro-Hungarian empire. But he also failed, just as Bonaparte did with his greater plan.

In our days we see the revival of a similar idea, in the insane project of the megalomaniac Hitler, on a still vaster scale. He has plunged the world into terror and misery of unprecedented magnitude, and the only alliance which he has brought about, by putting the clock of civilisation back to mediaevalism, is the unanimity with which he and his regime are hated.

Force can do little to bring about union. Self imposed "master-races," tyrants, and dictators will only postpone it indefinitely. Only the enlightenment of the people involved, their realisation that nothing can save them except complete fusion, perhaps on the model of the U S A, or Switzerland, and the acceptance of a common linguistic medium, will create it.

No one is more predestined to help and give a leading hand in this task than the English speaking nations. Anglomania is still strong in the Danubian Basin, in spite of the tragic blunders made by the Allies after the Great War. These have destroyed many illusions in Central Europe and robbed Britain and the U S A of some of their nimbus. But the prestige which they still enjoy would hardly stand a second shock of a post-Versailles type. Any such attempt will drive the victims into the arms of the extremists and world war number three may begin.

Now that the aeroplane has made mountain ranges and great rivers ineffective for defence, it is hopeless to draw coloured lines on the map. To hold plebiscites will be just as useless in the future as it has always been in the past, and to make certain promises to individual nations, instead of telling them the plain truth, namely, that their neighbours have the same right to live, is a crime. If we want to avert future wholesale slaughter, and to save civilisation, then these promises cannot be kept.

We must put political ambitions and the vanity of diplomats aside, and work on lines which make it possible, not only for the individual but for all nations, to live without fear, hunger, and disease.

Immeasurably minute compared with this task is any human effort, but if it only throws a spark of light on the vast problem, then these pages will have achieved more than I could hope.

WALTZING VOLCANO

CHAPTER I

THE SOURCE

“ . . . AND NOW, Ladies and Gentlemen, we are going to see the Castle Spring, the source of the Danube ! ” An elderly guide, walking with a group of sightseers, makes this statement, with the forced eloquence traditional in his profession. The men, women and children, who are of various ages, but are one and all bored by his monotonous recital of historical dates and names, now display some slight signs of curiosity.

Still very young, I am holding my mother's hand : I am tired of being dragged about this mediaeval city of Donau-Eschingen, and I have not appreciated the detailed biography of the Dukes of Fürstenberg, who own not only the church, which we have just been shown, but also the whole district. I am also very little impressed by the fact that their famous library harbours part of an ancient manuscript of the Nibelungen Saga ; I would much rather play with the cat which is slumbering unperturbed on one of the sunny window-sills.

We are standing in front of a large, square stone basin, its clear water welling up from unknown depths. I am not greatly interested and would love to throw the pebbles, which I am carrying, with a variety of other articles, in my pocket, into the well. But as there are so many adults present this temptation is soon overcome, and I go on listening to the boring recitation.

“ This spot is not more than 2,222 feet above sea level, and yet the river Danube only reaches its marine destination after having covered a distance of 1,775 miles ! Born in the Black Forest, and ending in the Black Sea ! ”

No sooner have my mother and I left the crowd than I overwhelm her with a torrent of questions. Why do they call it a Black Forest if all the trees are green ? What would happen if I threw pebbles into the well ? And if many boys did the same with a great many pebbles, would it stop the river's flow, and would all the steamers be stranded ? Would the fish die ? . . .

I am sitting, somewhat older, on a bench in a Budapest school, watching with concentrated interest a game of noughts and crosses, played by two boys who are sitting next to me.

The geography master's deep voice, which until now has reached my consciousness only in the form of a soporific drone, now suddenly thunders :

"Francis ! Are you asleep ?"

A stuttered "No, sir," does not sound too convincing, and he raises Cain.

"Tell me what you know of the Danube."

Well, I know quite a lot, but most of it I cannot tell him ! For example, how I hate to be taken to the promenade, on the bank of the Danube, after my face and hands have been forcibly washed, and I have been dressed in a white sailor suit : to the Corso, where people are sitting on long rows of chairs and watching crowds of other people, promenaders, passing and re-passing, strolling and displaying their new dresses. There I have to sit still and listen to the silly talk of grown-ups, while more fortunate boys, who can get as dirty as they like, and even take off their shoes, can go right down to the water. . . . But I have to tell the master something, for already he is growing impatient !

"Sir, the Danube springs from a well under the church in Donau-Eschingen : it is the second largest river in Europe, and after flowing through Bavaria, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria and Rumania, it empties itself, divided in a delta, into the Black Sea."

"Is that all you know ?"

He is not in the least impressed, and after making some not too complimentary comments on my mental capacity, with special reference to the geographical knowledge which I seem to possess, he proceeds to destroy some of my illusions. I am informed that the guide was bluffing me. Even if I could have filled up the whole church, including the stone basin, the flow of the Danube would never stop. The real parents of the Danube are the rivulets Brigach and Breg, whereas the Duke of Fürstenberg's castle spring only usurps this title. The Breg rises near Furtwangen and the Brigach somewhere in the Eastern Black Forest. They unite, and then absorb the castle rivulet, which reaches them through subterranean channels. Part of this alliance trickles into the river Aar, later to join the Rhine via the Lake of Constance, while the rest of the water flows on towards its final destination in Rumania.

I am thankful that the master's attention has now been diverted from my scanty knowledge, for he begins to demonstrate his own wisdom, displaying it, like an exhibitionist peacock, with half-closed eyes.

We learn from him, and are taught by others also, that as regards its length this majestic stream is surpassed in Europe only by the Volga, and that it receives the tribute of sixty rivers in its course.

It forged its way, in the dark past, from the Black Forest source,

through the Bavarian hills, along the foot of the Carpathians, to the plains of Hungary, when the now fertile land was still a waste, salty sea, stretching far to the East. After the disappearance of this sea the Danube struggled on, its wild rapids cutting their way through the Transylvanian Alps and forcing the "Iron Gate," where its boulder-strewn course is constricted by cliffs.

Wearied by its gigantic labours, the stream flows slowly across the steppes of Walachia, not far from the Rumanian oil-fields, and then, splitting into the threefold delta of the Killia, the Sulina and the St. George, it makes its final exit into the Black Sea.

At what period the first human beings appeared on the banks of the Danube will be for ever a secret, but long before the dawn of history its basin formed one of the centres of primitive civilisation. We have proof of this in the remains of the Krapina Man, a relative of the Neanderthaler, discovered in the valley of a Croatian tributary. Little is known of his origin, but his bones, and the type of his flint tools and weapons, identify him as a man of the Aurignac race.

Homo primogenius, as the anthropologist calls him, had no easy time. The mammoth, the sabre-toothed tiger, and the cave-bear were his contemporaries in those semi-tropical days, before the last glacial period had again covered Europe with ice. He had to fight for his life, with stone axe and flint-headed spear, where in our days only domestic animals roam.

The second Stone Age and the following Bronze Age saw a great increase of population. Moving along the rivers and entering the valleys, the early Europeans spread over the endless plains, and inhabited the lake-dwellings and hill-settlements of Central Europe.

About 600 B.C. the Celts began to move, from an area in the neighbourhood of the present Regensburg, in all directions of the compass, and the life-and-death struggle between East and West began, to continue down to the present day. This gigantic game of human snooker, the great migration of the peoples, mingled races and tribes, throwing without mercy into the melting-pot all who crossed its path. The resulting hotchpotch was to be the horror of schoolboys and students for innumerable generations.

The course of the Danube served as one of the most important highways for this colossal and multiple trek. Conquerors with huge armies, or single pioneers, wandering hordes of warriors and nomad families, adventurers and pilgrims, traders and artisans, all followed its flow. Learning and commerce proceed with the stream, yet for thousands of years its waters again and again ran red with blood.

This river, like a mysterious magnet, attracted men from far and near. Alexander the Great crossed the delta, fought countless battles for its banks. The Danu'

Rhaetia, Noricum, Pannonia, Dacia and Moesia were of the greatest importance to Rome, and the river, known by the Latins as the Danubius in its upper reaches, and the Ister in the lower course, served the Empire as an impregnable line of defence against the onslaught of the Barbarians.

Towns were built, and roads and bridges were constructed, some of them outlasting two millenia, to leave their mark on our modern civilisation. Vindobona, Carnutum, Arrabona and Aquincum are still lively cities, even if their names have been changed into Vienna, Budapest, Győr, and so forth. The Roman baths, and many of the highways and bridges, are just as serviceable as on the day when they were first opened by a representative of Caesar.

No sooner had things quieted down for a time, when fresh impacts disturbed the face of the map, which changed like the field of a kaleidoscope in the hands of a child.

Somewhere in Central Asia, near the Chinese border, the Mongols became restless, pushed westwards, and dislocated the Tartars, Turks, and Ugors, who in their turn set the Goths migrating.

The real trouble, however, began only when the Huns, like a hurricane, swept westwards from Asia. The yellow avalanche of Attila's slit-eyed hordes trampled down and swept away whole peoples, overturned nations, and gathered up their remnants. Mingling all breeds, they created an ethnical confusion never again to be sorted out in the history of mankind. Only madmen can believe that there are any pure European races left after this human tempest.

How the Huns managed to cover these enormous distances on their small, shaggy ponies, to find their way through virgin forest, across the steppes, over the hills and mountains, without the help of compass, is one of the greatest riddles of history.

For a while they settled down between Danube and Theiss, ruling from the Caspian to the Rhône over the greater part of Europe. *But soon after the death of Attila, who was killed on one of his numerous wedding nights, under circumstances worthy of the pen of a Conan Doyle, this terrible empire of robbers fell to pieces.* As sudden as their coming was the departure of the Huns.

The tremors of this shock were felt all over Europe like an earthquake; the myths and fables telling of the "Scourge of God" were current centuries after the departure of these murderous human locusts, who were succeeded by the Goths and Avars. Then appeared the Magyars, also on horseback, and not less dangerous to the occupants of the land, taking the usual toll of life.

... .. originated from the heart of Asia. They hordes, travelling from East to West, and skirting the of the Caspian

Sea, a region which served as a kind of marshalling-yard for all these invaders. But here the wholesale devastation of forests and other reasons changed climatic conditions radically within a comparatively short period of history, giving a fresh impetus to move on, to the wandering tribes.

The Magyars' ancestry and their early history are still obscure and in dispute; their own tradition is too legendary in character to be plausible. As the name *Hungarian* indicated, they were probably descended from the hordes of the Huns which had sent Attila forward; cousins of the Bulgarians and the Khazars, they had even been vassals of the latter people for a time. As the Khazar dynasty accepted Judaism in its early days, the Hungarian archaeologists do not care to mention this relationship, and the Magyar Nazis in particular are emphatic in denying all connection with their "Jewish" ancestors. Full of vitality, extremely gifted, but also over-ambitious, restless, ultra-chauvinistic, and conceited, they became a very important element in the explosive compound which filled the powder-barrel of Central Europe.

Great fighters, the Hungarians soon joined the general *mêlée*-in-being beyond their borders, and kept their neighbours in arms for centuries.

It would be most unjust, however, did we fail to realise the great services which they rendered to Western civilisation, by taking the main thrust of the Mongol and Turkish onslaught so long directed against Europe.

Hungary was the bulwark of Western Europe for five hundred years, not only on account of the country's ideal strategic position, but also by reason of the excellent fighting qualities of its people.

If ever a corner of the globe was especially created to serve as an ideal national homestead, then it was this part of the Danubian basin. Wide fertile plains lie snugly within a ring of towering mountains. The Carpathians keep out the icy winds from the North and East, while the Karst and the Balkan range shelter it from the cold Bora and the hot Sirocco of the South. These chains of alps, while forming an impregnable bastion in time of war, are also cornucopias, filled to the brim with minerals and ores of all descriptions. Here are great forests, marshes, and bogs rich in game, and large lakes, rivalling in the abundance of their fish the rivers and streams which thread the country, drain the fields, and serve as highways for heavy traffic.

The improvement of water-craft and new forms of warfare had made the Danube, like other rivers which were convenient boundaries yesterday, the axis of an entirely new economic system and brought, by changed social conditions, wealth to the conquerors and conquered alike.

An ideal climate, an endless succession of magnificent landscapes, and hundreds of hot mineral springs make this region a Mecca for the tired and ailing

Enormous herds of cattle and horses and innumerable flocks of sheep graze on the wide pastures that lie between the cornfields and orchards. In a word, it is a land of Canaan.

The one disadvantage of this land of flowing milk and honey was the envy it created in the hearts of other nations, who did their best to snatch it from its owners. For this reason Hungarians were never completely demobilised during the thousand years of their history. If they were not fighting the Western peoples, the Slavs and Germans, Tartars and Turks, the Russians, the French and others, fought them in turns or in alliance.

Some fresh ingredients in the racial cocktail were added when the Crusaders marched eastwards, using, as they did on several occasions, the course of the Danube as their main route from France and Germany to the Holy Land, or on their homeward journey. Not only did many of the Crusaders remain in the country, but romance and avarice, rape and violence, also played a great part in this involuntary eugenic experiment.

A strong though hardly welcome link was forged between English and Danubian history when Richard Cœur de Lion, on his way home from Palestine, was thrown into prison by the Duke of Babenberg, whom he had insulted during the siege of Acre. With the sanction of his Emperor, Henry the Sixth, the Duke confined Richard for several months in the fortress of Durenstein, then transferring him to Trifels.

After nearly two years it was at last arranged to liberate the English sovereign, on the condition that hostages should be given and a ransom paid of 160,000 silver marks. The hostages were accordingly delivered, and the King departed.

The romantic legend which tells us how the Provençal troubadour Blondel de Nesle discovered the whereabouts of his beloved patron Richard has been exploded by indiscreet historians. They have proved, from contemporary documents, that the real Lion Heart was very different from the pattern of knightly virtue created by Sir Walter Scott and other novelists. The disoblising archives tell us that although he was brave, he was uncouth and immoral, and moreover, that since he never paid more than 4,000 marks—that is, 2½ per cent of the agreed sum—he must have left the hostages to their fate!

The whole period is full of such historical skeletons in the cupboard. The troops of Godfrey de Bouillon and other Christian leaders who followed the sign of the Cross trained themselves for their future battles with the infidel by mass murder, wholesale

plunder, and the organising of large-scale pogroms against the Jews whom they found on their way. Crowds of fugitives, terrorised by the shameful deeds of the "Soldiers of Christ," were driven before them, and many found a permanent refuge in Hungary, or further East.

A little later the Tartars completely devastated these regions of Europe, perpetrating a holocaust unprecedented even in this much-disturbed corner of the globe. A further admixture of races resulted when, after the departure of the Mongols, German and Slavonic peasants, Jews, Italians, and others were encouraged to settle down in the now vacant territory. The same form of alien "blood-transfusion" had to be administered on several occasions in the later history of Central Europe, in order to prevent the total depopulation of whole countrysides. But if the colonists brought new life to these areas, they also imported linguistic difficulties and minority problems, and intensified the inflammatory conditions already dangerous enough in the Danubian Basin.

Plagues, rebellion, floods, internal strife, civil and religious wars followed on one another or occurred simultaneously. The struggle within Christendom, the conflict of the Reformation versus the old religion, weakened the West, and blinded it completely. Only a few realised the peril of the rising crescent moon, of the Eastern colossus preparing to return the numerous visits of the Crusaders. No one took any notice of the danger signals, and the storm caught a disunited Austria, a divided Hungary, more or less napping. They fell an easy prey to the fresh tactics of the Sultan's huge armies. A concentrated artillery barrage, employed for the first time in history, decided vital battles, and it was cold comfort to the Magyars to know that the Moslem's most accurate and heaviest cannon were cast by the Hungarian Orbás.

For nearly 180 years the Turks ruled over Eastern Europe, and the marks which they left on the conquered peoples are indelible. Turkish words were incorporated into their languages; Oriental habits and customs were introduced, never to be discarded. Steam baths, military brass bands, the coffee-house life so typical of Vienna, Budapest and other Danubian towns, are only minor examples. The whole social structure was strongly influenced by the unwelcome and protracted presence of the followers of Mohammed.

Their withdrawal left an Eastern Europe enervated, sick, and poor. The vacuum created by the great destruction of human life had to be filled again, and a renewed influx of very mixed multitudes increased the explosive possibilities of this racial infernal machine.

Unfortunately, the more western regions of Europe were in no better case. They too had become a battlefield on which the armies of Gustavus Adolphus, the French, the Flemings, the Spaniards

and the Dutch waged their continuous wars. In the end the conflagration spread to the already troubled Danubian countries.

British troops reached the Danube when the Duke of Marlborough joined hands with the Austrian Prince Eugene against the Elector of Bavaria and his allies, winning a decisive victory at Donauworth and Blindenheim Hochstadt, better known as Blenheim. The defeated generals were able to save their lives only by swimming across the river.

No sooner were there some signs of peaceful recovery than a catastrophe, again coming from the West, brought the process of healing abruptly to an end. After the eruption of the French Revolution had flung its fiery scoriae far to the East, provoking fresh convulsions all over Central Europe, the eternal lure of this Lorelei among rivers attracted Napoleon. He fought many battles here, and it was near the Danube that his armies first lost their reputation for invincibility.

Bonaparte's fall did not stop the bloodshed. Social upheavals, campaigns in Italy and the Crimea, the Austro-Prussian and Franco-German wars, Balkan squabbles and threats, followed one another in an endless red ribbon, right up to the present day.

These long records of our forefathers' activities were hammered into our brains by the masters of my Budapest school. Avalanches of historical data obscured real knowledge, perverting the naturally healthy judgment of youth. The story of the past is not narrated in an impartial manner, for local patriotism, chauvinism, and egotistical considerations colour and distort the truth. The historical picture is often painted in too rosy colours. Like a cake too heavily coated with icing sugar, it sickens the palate. Under the cloak of religious education the love of our neighbour is replaced by malice, and flag-waving patriots implant hatred in the innocent child's heart.

Leaving the institutes of enlightenment behind us, we embark on the hard university of life, and there we have to relearn history, after discarding the rosy spectacles of childhood. How difficult is it to make up one's mind, even in respect of present happenings, when these are seen through the artificial smoke screen created by the daily press, this strange parasitic growth on modern society! Still more difficult must it be to read the past from books, the record of facts being strongly coloured by the author's own prejudices, his outlook, and his personal tastes. In historical literature, as in the Press, egotism, vested interests, and other factors rule and guide the pen. But one learns the bitter lesson in time—learns to take everything with a grain of salt, and to pick out the truth from a mass of obscuring information.

I find that the greatest technical discovery of all times was the

use of a large pebble, first employed by one of our ape-ancestors for the purpose of opening a coconut. Unfortunately, however, the clever inventor soon discovered that his tool would crack human "nuts" with the same ease, and concentrated on the offensive qualities of his future inventions.

A long chain of bloodstained links leads upward from the primitive society (the first pack of animals or men joining forces for the pursuit of food, or uniting in defence) to the great Empires. Whether the links of the chain were family elders, chieftains, robber barons, kings, or emperors, the basic methods employed by them to increase their power and wealth have not greatly changed since the day when the cave-man first killed his fellow to obtain a woman. The murder-state founded by the criminal psychopath Hitler, the Djinghiz Khan of Braunau, is only a culmination of the ancient practice.

In the course of my travels, as I visit many cities, I see multitudes of monuments, memorial tablets, triumphal arches, statues and other signs of commemoration in stone or bronze. But behind the frozen smiles of bronze or marble features, the heroic and theatrical poses, I suspect, in most cases, only human vices; ferocious egoism, imperiousness, cruelty, and other defects of character. The real creators of progress, the millions who have suffered and achieved, who are still suffering and achieving for the coming generations, have no memorial save their own creations in stone, metal, wood, or paper and ink, for which honour is too often paid only to the few whose images decorate, but do not always adorn, our towns and villages. . . .

The Danube flows eastwards, its endless waves rolling down to the sea. Life also flows to its appointed end, to be renewed in our children, as a river is born again, by rain, from the vapours of the ocean.

Life is our real school: and learning, as I have said already, begins only on leaving school. I had my first practical history lesson, which lasted for more than four years, in the Great War. I received a certain amount of political tuition during the post-war period of revolutions, and I took part in the geographical game of the migration of peoples by wandering from Hungary, via Germany, to England. Here, with the mature mind of an adult, I have watched an instructive experiment; I have seen how a second world war can be started within less than twenty years.

Evening classes, in the art of enduring anachronistic barbarities, were attended by our whole family, who, during the Blitz, with millions of others, went through a practical course of training for cave life.

But the scene changed completely when we left home for a visit to the West of Scotland, in order to enjoy some rest from bombing.

To meet people again who had not had our experiences, to listen to the murmur of rivulets instead of the drone of aeroplanes, to look into a blue sky that was not littered with barrage balloons, soon restored the troubled mind. A few quiet nights, an undisturbed bath, a stroll in peaceful surroundings, re-adjusted the dislocated sense of proportion.

We went about sightseeing: and first we visited the shrine of Robert Burns. The heavy motor-coach sped alarmingly along the smooth Scottish highway. One was not quite sure whether the driver was demonstrating his skill in swerving round bends at full speed, by way of homage to his fellow-countryman McAdam, inventor of the modern road-surface, who was born somewhere in this neighbourhood, or whether the time-table alone dictated this mad haste. But all the passengers, except a few local fishermen, were on the verge of nausea.

The venerable town of Ayr was left behind. As we crossed the Doon, the roofs and towers of the village of Alloway, with the "Auld Brig" throwing its single span from bank to bank of the wooded stream, and the Burns Monument, appeared in the background. The poet's birthplace, the "clay biggin," and the Kirk where Tam o'Shanter had the shock of his life, were hidden behind trees. It was here, in this small cottage, that Kossuth, on one of his lecture-tours, signed the visitor's book, with the words:

Louis Kossuth in exile
to Robert Burns in immortality.

The road follows the winding, rocky shore of the Clyde. In the north are the majestic, snow-covered peaks of the Isle of Arran: to the left stretch the beautiful greenish-brown Carrick hills, while far in the west the strange, stumpy granite cone of Ailsa Craig rises from the ocean. It is a relic of the times when volcanoes covered the whole district with molten lava, and the now so peaceful Heads of Ayr rumbled threateningly before eruption.

On either side of the highway shaggy cattle graze on the steep pastures, and bored sheep, with dark and curiously Semitic features, nibble the short grass. We pass a few very robust-looking little cottages, some fishing-villages with tiny harbours, which one might fancy were made to shelter toy boats, and then, again, country houses and parks of Royal dimensions, bearing evidence of immense wealth.

Dunure Castle, standing on a high, dark rock, set against the background of the leaden, stormy sea, and a vicious-looking sky of towering clouds, makes the sinister, blood-stained history of the ruin only too credible. . . .

. . . History, memoirs . . . The changing scenery and the name of Kossuth start a strange train of thought; they conjure up my

past, recalling visions from the bygone half-century, raising the ghosts of those I have met in the nearly fifty years of my life.

In front of me, in the coach, are my two sons. The elder one, in his British infantry battle-dress, the younger wearing the red blazer of his London school. Painfully I feel that it will hardly be possible for me to pass my memories on to them, to paint for them the picture of my so troubled life. The chaos created by two world wars, the constant change of domicile, the fate that has driven me from country to country, from place to place, will make this difficult, if not entirely impossible.

We share this fate, however, which makes us strangers to our own children, with millions of other parents, who are now scattered about the highways of the globe, driven, in a new world-migration, from city to city, from country to country, by the storm of hatred that whips whole populations into flight, chasing a multitude of wandering Ahasueruses, who, like the leaves of the autumn, or the dust-clouds driven by the gusts that herald the approaching tempest, are swept along the traffic routes of the world and find neither rest nor refuge.

The gulf between the generations, the mental barriers between parents and children, created by difference of age, are insurmountable even under the most favourable conditions. But it does make for a less imperfect understanding if the family has lived all its life in the same surroundings and the same country.

I may not have quite understood my father, nor did I ever know all the details of his existence, but I do at least know the general outlines and the atmosphere of his life, and the character of the people with whom he had dealings. My education, though perhaps on more modern lines than his, was fairly similar; I understood his and his parents' language, and I lived, as they did, on the shores of the Danube, under the spell of this strange river.

But all such common experiences, which would have made it easier for them to understand their parents' lives, are unknown to my sons and to other children, whose families are in a similar situation. It is not only the circumstance that they have grown up in quite a new epoch, in a different country, speaking a tongue foreign to their grandparents, but also the fact that their life runs on very different lines, and among men and women whose outlook and mentality are not quite the same as ours, that makes explanation so difficult.

The very fact that my mother, who came to Hungary from North Germany when she married my father, sprang from an entirely different milieu, and felt herself an alien in her new surroundings, endowed me with a heterogeneous mentality. To many things in this environment she was consciously or unconsciously hostile, and she never quite succeeded in adapting herself to it, for it seemed

to her that everything in it was on a lower plane than that to which she had been accustomed. Whether this difference was actual, or whether she only imagined it, must remain a question. Real or imaginary, it has made it much more difficult for me to understand my paternal ancestors.

How difficult must it be, then, for my children, or for an outside observer, to gain any real understanding of their circumstances, or to savour the atmosphere of my childhood !

Nevertheless, I long to bequeath to my sons my reminiscences of my early life, and in so doing to conjure up a world which they never knew. And it may be that I am moved by the desire to give a kind of immortality to men and events which would otherwise pass into oblivion.

Just as a drop of water, magnified under the microscope, may reveal a minute and self-contained world which enables us to gain understanding of the fundamental principles of biology, so, I should like to think, this modest example of a simple family chronicle may make the life, the conditions, and the psychology of Central Europe a little more actual for the reader.

Biographies and autobiographies. . . . I remember standing one day, in a great public library, before shelves upon which thousands upon thousands of such volumes were ranged. Famous names were there—the names of great scholars, musicians, generals, poets, politicians, painters, who owed their relative immortality to their learning, their actions, or their genius. Often enough it happened that men of no great personal significance won admission to these ranks, merely through a special constellation of circumstances : because they had lived in a heroic age, or in the shadow of some great man. Others, again, had written with such art that their careers, unremarkable in themselves, were revealed with prismatic radiance.

Memoirs ! How uninteresting the present moment may be !—and yet, as we look back upon it, even the most monotonous existence can fascinate us by its kaleidoscopic changes. For the market-woman the fruit or vegetable market may be utterly wearisome or commonplace, but for the artist, who sees it with eyes athirst for colour, it represents a unique experience.

Every man judges his own life from a different point of view. Grock, the clown, entitled his volume of reminiscences : "Life's a Lark !" A waiter chose the words : "Coming, sir !" In other cases the name has furnished the title, or the profession, as in "Fifty Years a Surgeon." I can even imagine a mathematician publishing a volume of memoirs "Fifty Years, or the 1,576 million seconds of my Life."

Life ! But is it possible to describe one's life ? The infinite variations of milliards of images, sounds, emotions, incessantly

changing, coming and going and sinking into the night of forgetfulness. Disappearing, it would seem, for ever : and then, by a word, a gesture, a breath of fragrance, to be re-awakened, conjured up out of the blank darkness of the past, fresh and vital as at the moment when they were experienced. Moments like bright-coloured beads, and others dull as the grey dust on letters yellow with age. Moments like flowers, like sparkling jewels, like smouldering embers or drops of corrosive acid. Moment adds itself to moment, yet not one resembles its predecessor or its successor. There are moments filled like thunderclouds with electric energy, with pain or pleasure, thirst or hunger, anxiety, delight, or terror.

And then, again, sleep. Unconscious continuance, like the inaudible trickling of an hourglass. Yet out of the nothingness of this subconsciousness, the tiny airbubbles of dreams, like many-coloured glittering glass balls, rise into the moonlight of fantasy. They float upwards, to burst at the surface of the waking mind, leaving barely a trace on the consciousness.

Dream and reality, forgetting and remembering, in eternal alternation. One can describe a man's life only if one can paint the portraits of his forefathers. In us the chain of millions of lives is continued, beginning somewhere in the primal mists of the past, when the first cells began their primitive existence on the cooling surface of the earth. But I can hardly commence with an entire theory of evolution, a complete history of the world. I must pass over many millions of years, and take as my starting-point the moment at which the simple history of my family begins.

My forebears bequeathed to me no castles, no strongholds, no galleries of ancestral portraits, no splendid suits of armour or diamond-encrusted weapons, no libraries, no archives to lighten the biographer's task, not even a pedigree, engrossed on parchment, as documentary proof of what we already know, that although we can give no names to the individual rungs, yet a family ladder of immeasurable length leads into the darkness of the past.

A few yellowing photographs, letters, and certificates, and a few dozen tombstones, dispersed all over Central Europe, now perhaps destroyed by the vandalism of "racial" hatred : that is all that remains to help me, to assist my memory.

Family histories and the recollections of one's own life seem so important, and yet, fundamentally, they do no more than disport themselves on the borders of world-history, like the particles of dust dancing in a ray of sunlight. The whole span of time which I am able to describe, including the years of which I really know nothing, beyond a few dates of births and deaths, covers in all barely two hundred years. An endless age for the individual, a mere nothing in the history of the human race. Yet of all the things that have happened in these two centu-

during the last fifty years, will be the occasion of writing whole libraries of books

The periods of history are named only after the events, there is no bell, no gong as in the theatre, to warn us that a new act is about to begin. How could I have foreseen, at the end of June, 1914, that the flag slowly sinking to half mast above the Hofburg of Ofen betokened the beginning of the world war?

For me, at the time, what had happened was merely a sensational item of news, but the consequences of that hour were to change the face of Europe, and indeed of human civilisation. For the individual, who is affected by them, if at all, only after a certain lapse of time, world historical events do not at the moment seem of so very much importance. The important things, for him, are those that happen in his own little circle. Flies, as they creep over the surface of a great historical painting, have no notion what the picture really represents.

But to return to my family—if it is mainly my father's family that I shall describe, it is not that I wish to belittle the importance of my maternal ancestry. But for my readers and my children the primitive conditions under which my paternal ancestors lived will be much more difficult to imagine and understand than the Western environment of my mother's kin. This is the only reason why I wish to describe them more exactly.

The highest shoot of the family tree which I have been able to reach bears the name of Wolf. This Wolf was the father of my great great grandmother, whose name was Jetty or Henrietta, and who died at Mattersdorf, in the Burgenland, in the year 1823. And I know that her husband, my great-great-grandfather, Simon Lasar, was a butcher in that town.

From these scanty data, and the few words which I have heard concerning these people from my friends and relatives, I will try to reconstruct their lives. At first sight this seems almost impossible. But when I reflect that with the help of science it has been possible, from a few teeth and fragments of bone, to reconstruct the skulls of the Neanderthal and Piltdown men, it seems that I might be able, with the aid of local history, to draw a picture which, if not absolutely truthful, will yet reveal a family likeness.

I can only hope that I shall not have the same experience as the legendary Count Mikosch, who commissioned a famous painter to paint a portrait of his deceased father. The artist, who had never seen the Count's father, had no photographs, no sketches, no busts to guide him. But since he did not wish to lose the generous fee which was offered him, he obtained a description of the old gentleman from his son. When Mikosch set eyes on the finished portrait he is said to have exclaimed, after considering it for some minutes: "My dear lamented father, how greatly you have altered!"

CHAPTER II

THE PROTECTOR

THE Burgenland, lying to the south of the Danube, constitutes the border region between Austria and Hungary. It is a delightful country, full of variety, a land of fertile fields and rich pastures, of rivers, wooded hills and vineyards, of little towns, picturesque villages, monasteries and convents, ruined castles and mineral springs, and in the north, at the foot of the Leitha hills, is the Neusiedler-See.

This lake, which is nowhere more than knee-deep, is twenty-two miles in length and eleven in width. Much overgrown with weeds, it harbours a fauna—and, in particular, a bird population—such as has not its like in Central Europe. An attempt was once made to drain the lake; it was apparently successful, and cultivation was begun. But suddenly, in the most mysterious fashion, the brackish water oozed out of the ground again, and to the delight of the waterfowl and the frogs, but not of the peasants in occupation of the soil, the great sheet of water regained its former proportions.

Apart from this great area of water, and the woods, which cover one-fourth of the country, ninety per cent. of the Burgenland is cultivated. The proximity of the cities of Vienna, Wienerneustadt, Graz, and Ödenburg has not only exerted a cultural influence on the inhabitants, but by providing a market for their produce it has stimulated the cultivation of fruit, vegetables and cereals, the rearing of poultry, and the breeding of horses and cattle.

The slopes of the Rosalien, Gunnsen and Ödenburger Hills, offering an ideal situation for vineyards, yielded a product whose fame extended far beyond the frontiers. The wines of Rust, Eisenberg and Oggau are in themselves enough to explain the jovial and light-hearted character of the population, and have set their stamp on the whole region.

Many of the villages were founded in the time of Charlemagne, when the religious Orders and the bishoprics, by encouraging the immigration of Bavarian peasants, brought about the systematic colonisation and cultivation of the soil.

The three small linguistic islands in which Hungarian is spoken appear to date from a time when the Hungarian State was anxious to protect its frontier by a strip of uncultivated "no man's land," on which it could maintain a series of frontier posts.

For centuries the Burgenland served as a buffer State between Austria and Hungary, and these two States played ball, as

with the suzerainty over this region ; now it belonged to the one, now to the other.

It was the pleasing custom, in the Middle Ages, and indeed long afterwards, to make the assumption of sovereign rights the occasion of decreeing the immediate expulsion of the Jews domiciled in the district. They departed, in so far as they were permitted, with all their goods and chattels ; but in most cases they merely crossed the frontier, or took refuge in a neighbouring community, returning at the earliest opportunity, and awaiting the next decree of expulsion. But the civil authorities and the clergy saw to it that they did not always get off so lightly. Provocative speeches, with the assistance of the wines of the country, increased the joviality and light-heartedness of the burgesses and the peasantry to such a degree that on such occasions many a Jewish family was "deported" once and for all to a better world.

Mattersdorf, together with its sister communities—Eisenstadt, Kobelsdorf, Kittsee, Deutsch-Kreuz, Frauenkirchen, and Lackenbach—belonged to the so-called "Seven Communes," which included Neufeld also, though with this addition the communities were more than seven.

A memorial tablet in the synagogue of Mattersdorf gives the year 1353 as that of the building of the first Jewish temple there ; but according to legend and tradition the Jewish settlement is much more ancient.

In 1417 Mattersdorf came under the suzerainty of the Dukes of Lower Austria, and so remained until the middle of the seventeenth century. Fortunately for the Mattersdorf Jews, however, this suzerainty was more or less nominal, and thanks to the delegation of power and the subdivision of the State it was actually subject to a feudal overlord, Baron Franz von Weisspriach.

Weisspriach was one of those petty potentates who had the courage to protect the Jews entrusted to him, even against the injunctions of his sovereign. Whether his motives were entirely unselfish is uncertain, but at all events he contrived to protect the lives and property of his protégés, and at least to mitigate the severity of the radical decrees of the Emperor.

The capture of the fortress of Ofen by the Turks had the "logical" consequence that the magistrate of Ödenburg expelled the Jews of that town. They fled into the Seven-Communes, and from this refuge made complaint to the Emperor Ferdinand and the Magyar authorities of the injuries which they had suffered. The Emperor instructed Weisspriach to take them under his protection ; moreover, in 1529 he renewed the privileges of the Jews of Lower Austria, though this did not hinder him, fifteen years later, from decreeing the expulsion of all the Jews from this region.



PRINCE NICHOLAS ESTERHÁZY "THE MAGNIFICENT"

[To face p. 16]



HAYDN IN THE UNIFORM OF THE ESTERHAZY COURT
MUSICIANS

One is reminded almost of a burlesque interlude in a Greek tragedy when one reflects that the conflict between the lesser and greater potentates, in respect of the expulsion and expropriation of a few Jewish families, took place in an age which saw the discovery of America, the beginning of the Reformation, and the destruction of the Spanish Armada, while Sultan Suleiman conquered the whole of Hungary and laid siege with his troops to Vienna.

Ferdinand surrendered the throne to his son Maximilian II; there was a new emperor, but the old system continued; persecutions, expulsions, trials for the desecration of the Host, blood-accusations, murders and assassinations without end.

Weisspriach, who in the meantime had received, in addition to Mattersdorf, the town of Eisenstadt in fief, was denounced to the Emperor by the councillors, magistrates and burgesses for giving refuge to too many Jews in the latter town, and allowing them to practise handicrafts, carry on trades and commit other similar "offences."

The petition is dated August 16, 1569, and Weisspriach must have received immediate information of its contents, for only two days later his answer was on its way to Vienna. In the privacy of his chamber the worthy baron, even two hundred years before the birth of Goethe, would surely have had a few classical quotations at his disposal which would have enabled him to express his feelings, but in writing he did no more than appeal in the most courteous terms to the imperial decrees and privileges.

An imperial commission now established the fact that in Mattersdorf 67 Jews were domiciled in 11 houses, and Baron von Weisspriach, to whom they paid 24 thalers in taxes, as well as a Christmas gift of 8 florins, was amazed to learn that they were so numerous. But he did not find it extraordinary that there should be any Jews at all living there after an expulsion 25 years earlier.

In 1571 the Imperial Chamber renewed its admonition that the Jews must once and for all be expelled from Mattersdorf; nevertheless, they remained undisturbed until Weisspriach's death five years later, as did the Jews in Eisenstadt. After his death they were really compelled to leave Mattersdorf, but they were soon back again, as may be seen from documents of the year 1588. And in 1622 they drew a winning number in the lottery of fate, for then the whole district came into the possession of the Counts Esterházy, so that the Jews were henceforth under the protection of one of the most powerful families of magnates in all Europe.

Although in 1647 Mattersdorf, in the ball-game of politics, was again returned to Hungary, and although the Jews, in the traditional manner, were admonished to leave the country, the admonition appears to have been ineffectual, for their residence

referred to in a document of this date. But the Turks, retreating after the siege of Vienna, carried many away with them, and their ransom demanded great sacrifices.

In 1694 the Esterházy, in order to avoid any further disputes or disturbances, issued a writ of protection, and who would care to pick a quarrel with such protectors on account of a few Jews?

In order to estimate at its true value the significance of such protection we must regard this family more closely.

In the year of our Lord 1582 a son, Miklos or Nicholas, was born to a simple Hungarian squire, one Baron Esterházy. This Miklos married a widow whose family was of no social importance, but whose financial position was exceptional. After her death Miklos was again favoured by destiny; for, as his second wife, he married another extremely wealthy widow, who brought as her dowry a fine estate on the Austro-Hungarian frontier. Further, for his services in the war against Turkey, and his attachment to the House of Habsburg, he received the title of Count, and so Miklos founded the line of the Counts Esterházy of Frakno, or Forchtenstein.

In Forchtenstein, on a rock over 600 feet in height, the new Count built a fortress, and within it, these being the turbulent times of the Thirty Years' War and the Turkish War, he caused a cistern, 480 feet below the surface, to be hewn out of the solid rock by Turkish prisoners of war. In a vault thus hewn in the rock the family treasure was placed in safety, and at the same time the Count made testamentary dispositions by which the successive heads of the family were pledged to increase this treasure. Only the ransoming of an Esterházy from slavery would justify the expenditure of even a portion of this wealth.

His successor, his son Paul, created field-marshal at the age of thirty, likewise distinguished himself in the war against the Turks. He, like his father, was extremely provident in his choice of a partner, and especially in his choice of his second wife, a Countess Tökölly, while his sister married Count Nadasdy. But both his Tökölly father-in-law and his Nadasdy brother-in-law were executed by the Habsburgs as guilty of high treason, and their property was confiscated. However, the worthy field-marshal had no scruples about purchasing at bargain prices the estates of his executed relatives, thereby increasing the landed property of the family to nearly 875,000 acres. It contained 40 towns, 130 villages, and 34 castles, and was said to equal the kingdom of Württemberg in size. The winter flock of merino sheep was maintained at 250,000 head, and as to every hundred one shepherd was allowed, the Esterházy, boasted of having more shepherds than other landowners had sheep.

The Thirty Years' War and the long Turkish ordeal left Europe

weary of strife and bloodshed. The magnates of the country, who had in the meantime become extremely wealthy, sought for a new field of activity, and were eager to enjoy the peace of which they had been so long deprived. They began to compete among themselves in the building of castles and palaces, and in ostentatious display.

Count Paul Esterházy, shortly after the final siege of Vienna by the Turks, built the palace of Eisenstadt at the foot of the Leitha hills. The palace, though not remarkable for its beauty—it was designed in a somewhat heavy Italian style by Carlo Carlone—is exceptional for its size, and was nine years in the building.

Innumerable suites of apartments, a vast, richly ornamented ballroom, a hall decorated with frescoes—where at times 1,400 people sat down to table—nearly two hundred guest-chambers, with stabling for the same number of horses, give one but a poor idea of the luxury of this princely seat.

The extent of its parks, laid out in the English style, is most extraordinary, but that is their least attraction. There are few gardens in Europe surpassing this collection of rare and exotic plants, whether in numbers or in point of artistic arrangement. In the enormous hothouses a world of flowers of every colour and climate sets the seasons at defiance.

Wood, water, hill and valley were so ably seconded by art, that this combination left nothing to be desired. From the castle one can look out far over the huge sheet of the Neusiedler See, the lesser Hungarian plain, and the fruitful Burgenland. Even the “family safe” of Forchtenstein is visible, and as far as the eye can see all is Esterházy property.

The wealth and unprecedented luxury of the family, and also, no doubt, the military services of the field-marshal, induced the Emperor Leopold, in 1687, to bestow the title of Prince on Paul Esterházy, and to give him powers of life and death over his subjects.

The new Prince organised at his own expense a pilgrimage from the castle of Eisenstadt to Mariazell, in which 11,000 persons took part, with carriages, saddle-horses and camels.

But the imperial House of Habsburg, itself setting a good example, directed the attention of the nobles to art and learning, and more especially to music. Every nobleman regarded it as his duty to install singers and musicians, though the size of the orchestra, with the quality of the singers and conductors, varied in accordance with the nobleman's means.

Naturally, the Esterházys were quick to follow the new fashion, and after the death of Prince Paul, his son Prince Josef Anton, in loyal obedience to his grandfather's wishes,

the almost fabulous wealth of the family, maintained at Eisenstadt an orchestra of appropriate size and quality

By the next Prince, Paul Anton, this orchestra was increased in size, and on May 1, 1761, Josef Haydn, then in his thirtieth year, was engaged as assistant Kapellmeister. With an initial salary of 400 gulden,¹ the "Vice Kapellmeister" was subordinate to the Kapellmeister Werner, who, apart from calling his assistant a "scribbler of ditties and a presumptuous coxcomb," did nothing to obstruct his progress. He was fortunately intelligent enough to realise the other's genius, and he gradually made way for the young man. It is beyond question that the opportunities which were afforded by this magnificent household, as regards the quality of the orchestra and the singers, and the possibility of a care free existence, contributed greatly to Haydn's development.

The Prince, himself a good violinist, gave the Vice Kapellmeister, whom he nicknamed "The Blackamoor," a free hand, and helped him in every way. Not only were the servants, in so far as they were musically gifted, available for the orchestra and the chorus, but on festive occasions they were reinforced by the school masters, organists, and choir boys of Mattersdorf and other communities.

It did not greatly trouble Haydn—who was very ugly, but a great ladies' man—that he should be required to conduct the orchestra in uniform, for this, being both becoming and magnificent, greatly improved his appearance.

No expense was spared on these uniforms, nor indeed in any direction. Paul Anton, moreover, was on excellent terms with his Empress, Maria Theresa, and his loyalty was a costly virtue. Twice during the Seven Years' War he equipped at his own expense a regiment of hussars, each one thousand strong, and maintained them during the whole campaign, but the money thus expended yielded a rich dividend.

Prince Paul Anton died at the age of fifty one. He was succeeded by his brother Miklos, a figure out of the Arabian Nights, who honestly deserved the title of "Esterhazy the Magnificent."

He allowed no opportunity to pass that provided an excuse for a feast or a solemn celebration or pageant. His luxury was fabulous. His bediamonded gala costume was world famous. A pearl embroidered housings and uniform for horse and rider cost the trifle of four million gulden, and the repairs to this modest equipment, after it had been worn but once, twelve thousand gulden.

Everything was the occasion of a celebration. His entry into the castle of Eisenstadt, his son's marriage to Countess Erdody, or the return of the "Magnifico" from a sojourn in France, set

¹ Austrian Gulden (100 Kreuzer) about 1s 8d

the whole neighbourhood in a turmoil of excitement. Papa Haydn, as the children of Eisenstadt called him, had his hands full, what with gala performances of opera and the rehearsal of special compositions. His salary had by this time been increased to 782 gulden.

It would be unjust, however, to describe Miklos II as an idle spendthrift, interested only in barbaric luxury and splendour. A man of refined feeling, and a connoisseur in the arts, and also, in respect of his liberal ideas, very far in advance of his age, he did not content himself with maintaining the magnificence of his princely household; on the contrary, he was greatly concerned with the welfare of his subjects, and they idolised him.

The Jews of the Seven Communes were compelled to appeal to his protection, for Maria Theresa, whose later portraits and statues display such a motherly and benevolent smile, revived the ancient practices and made their lives a burden to them.

The "Magnificent," however, would allow no one to take liberties with him, so that under his protection the Jewish communities flourished exceedingly.

The fortress of Forchtenstein brooded like a hen over the whole countryside. The famous Esterházy Grenadiers, none of them less than 5 ft. 10 in. in height, had given proof that they could do more than merely wear their parade uniforms, that in case of need they could lay about them with a will, enforcing their Prince's wishes and restoring order.

It was peaceful in Mattersdorf; men could breathe freely there and enjoy the simple life. No one interfered with the Jewish community, or prohibited the practice of the Jewish religion, or the pursuit of trades and handicrafts. The luxury of Eisenstadt was not regarded with envious eyes, for it led to the circulation of money among the people. As they used to say in Mattersdorf: "From a golden coach falls a golden nail."

The town gradually expanded. With the Prince's permission, more and more houses were built round about the synagogue, and the Jewish quarter extended for a considerable distance along the Vulka.

At the entrance were two iron posts with lateral arms, from which lanterns were suspended on Friday evenings, as a sign that the Sabbath had begun. From this point a flight of steps led up to the houses that stood on higher ground, and on these steps the people gathered of an evening, or on Saturday afternoons, in order to discuss the local happenings. While the elders were attracted by the news exchange on the steps, the young men frequented the path along the stream, the "Corso."

A little farther on, in an open space, was a less fashionable rendezvous. Here clothes were washed, here children

midden heap, which hardly added to the amenities of the spot, bore witness to the lack of sanitary conveniences in the houses, for which it had to serve as substitute

At the sign of the "Eisgriebl" there was always good cheer. There the best wine was drawn, and the home brewed beer warmed the cockles of the heart. There from time to time the burgesses and peasants met the inhabitants of the Jewish town, or their visitors from neighbouring towns and villages.

Passing through a labyrinth of lanes and alleys, where a conglomeration of warped and weathered cottages and hovels clung to the larger houses, the whole being honeycombed with narrow passages and entries, one came to the principal building of the Jewish town, the synagogue, on which the whole was centred.

The synagogue was the heart of the community, and in these houses and hovels pulsed the primitive life of the Mattersdorfers. It was here that they lived, in these little kitchens and bed chambers, always full to overflowing, more tightly packed than ever when they had to give refuge to fugitives. This was the "Jewish town," wedged in among the houses of the Christian town. Rarely did the Prince give permission for the building of a new house. There was never room enough, the lanes and alleys were always thronged.

There they stood in the morning, turning to the East, in kitchens and bed chambers, in doorways and sheltered corners, with prayer shawls over their shoulders, with phylacteries on their foreheads and arms, rocking gently to and fro as they murmured their prayers, rocking, swaying, gently bowing, with movements that were a relic of extreme antiquity, instinctive as a nervous reaction or reflex.

They turned over the leaves of the thick prayer books with their angular letters—books in a tongue which was really understood by few, and which others had quite forgotten in their long Ahasuerus wanderings. In quiet tones they spoke to the austere God *of their faith, lamenting their griefs*. The sing song murmur was like the tearful plaint of a child, telling his mother what the wicked world has done to him. Sometimes the worshippers' eyes were closed, but the rocking, bowing and swaying was never interrupted.

On solemn feast-days, packed into the little synagogue like sheep taking shelter from a storm, they abandoned themselves with all their hearts and all their voices to the mass psychosis. On the Day of Atonement, wearing the white shirts and caps in which they would one day be borne to the little burial ground, they stood with gnawing stomachs on the hard stone pavement as the twenty-four hours crept slowly by. Or in Passover week, and on the day of Purim, how quickly the time flew when all were so joyful!

These festivals! They have all come down to us from the childhood days of humanity. What they symbolise is immemorial, but now every religion and every sect claims them as its special property. The Hanukah, or the Feast of Dedication, borrowed, perhaps, with its gifts and candles, from Babylon or Egypt, and afterwards dedicated to the Roman Janus, has become, after yet another baptism, the festival of Christmas, with its decorated tree.

Shebuoth, the Feast of Pentecost, is merely the offspring of the pagan harvest sacrifice. Simhath Torah, the rejoicing over the roll of the Law, with its palm-fronds, branches of myrtle, and boughs of willow, its oranges and lemons, is but the renewal of the gratitude of our Stone Age ancestors for the ripened fruits of the earth. The great sacrifice of fire, when men and beasts were offered to the gods, has dwindled to a trifling affair of oil lamps and candles. The Bacchanalia and the fierce rejoicings of the heathen have been tamed and bridled until they have become no more than a soothing, rhythmical murmur, a gentle rocking, swaying and bowing. But woe to the heretic who dared to utter these truths aloud! The strict laws and ritual which were a vital necessity in the tropical climate of the East, which the wanderers had brought with them, and still maintained under such different circumstances, forbade any criticism.

Townfolk and peasantry looked askance at all these things. For centuries they had heard hatred preached; they had been taught to execrate the Jews. Mysteries whose symbolism has given them an air of secrecy tempt the observer to conjecture, lead him to imagine things that have no real existence. He abhors what is strange and outlandish; there is much that he does not understand, or if he does understand it he is unwilling to perceive its innocence. His masters and pastors have taught him hatred and suspicion, and now, of a sudden, he is to offer friendship and the handclasp of peace! In his simple logic he finds this hard to understand.

Gradually, however, Gentile and Jew became accustomed to each other. Enlightenment increased, and the mysterious dropped its mask. The old people submitted, the young adapted themselves, and in the course of time the life of the people took the mould of the new environment, until hatred was once again dragged up out of the underworld, and the bitter, tragic drama was played out again.

But for the time being all was quiet. Men breathed freely, and if Esterházy the Magnificent was given to feasting and pageantry, the Jews of Mattersdorf were little less addicted to them. They could not, of course, rival him in luxury, but they took advantage of every pretext for a feast or a celebration.

The religious festivals were strictly observed, and although there was good cheer enough at the feast of Purim, and rejoicing at the Feast of Tabernacles, it was at weddings, and the circumcision of the new-born, and the confirmation of the boys of thirteen who had "attained to manhood" that the wine flowed most freely, the cooks achieved their masterpieces, and the Jewish temperament expressed itself with the greatest abandon.

Marriages were solemnised in the open air, in the square overlooked by the synagogue. There the wedding-canopy was erected, and there the whole community assembled. Every rite was strictly performed, but after the religious ceremony discipline was relaxed, and the joyful character of the gathering was manifested.

The hospitality on such occasions was almost excessive. Those who were not invited to the wedding feast were at least entertained with wine and pastry, plum-snaps, dough cakes, puff turnovers and whatnot, whose ingredients—flour, eggs, sugar, raisins, nuts, poppy-seed, saffron and goose dripping—were transmuted in the stomach, by some mysterious alchemy, into a substance similar to lead. Here the foundation was laid of the chronic digestive disorders, the internal maladies, which sent so many patients to the mineral spas, and made the physicians of the countryside rich.

Wedding presents were ceremoniously announced, and the married couple were affectionately congratulated in terms which left nothing to the imagination, and which the young people present must have found highly instructive.

The musicians, or *Klesmer*, as they were called, although they could not rival in technical accomplishment their elegant colleagues in the Castle, enjoyed at least this advantage over them—that on such occasions they could get well and truly intoxicated, an indulgence which was strictly denied to the aristocratic members of the Esterházy orchestra.

The guests on these gatherings were modishly attired. Frock coats with cutaway skirts, silver buttons, turned up cuffs and "Stuart" cravats were worn, with coloured waistcoats, velvet breeches, white stockings, buckled shoes, and a green surtout, the whole being completed by the biretta, familiarly known as the "*Schabbes Deckel*," the "Sabbath Lid" or "tile." Only rabbis and scholars wore fur-trimmed caps and cloaks.

We have no description of the women's costumes. The women, in their still somewhat Oriental world, lived much of their lives within the four walls of the house, behind grated windows, and in public they were segregated from the men. But this did not prevent them from wielding the sceptre in the bosom of the family.

Since the long beard was banned, most of the men were clean shaven, and there were lively doings in the barber's shop on the

eve of feasts and ceremonies. This shop was a kind of social club : while the outward man was being groomed, items of news were exchanged, or politics discussed. Here, among men, the latest gossip relating to Papa Haydn's none too happy married life, and his affair with the 19-year-old wife of the singer Polzelli could be divulged, and other similar rumours published with appropriate smiles and guffaws. Or the hairdresser might assure his customers that he had learned from an authentic source that the Prince, impressed by his recent visit to Paris, was proposing to build a fabulous palace, after the fashion of Versailles, in the marshy, fever-haunted region of Hansag, on the south-eastern shore of the Neusiedler See.

The customers from the sister communities would relate, with simulated indignation, the most recent slander in circulation respecting the people of Mattersdorf. Like the members of a quarrelsome but affectionate family, each of the Seven Communes had its nickname, and was the subject of innumerable anecdotes circulated by its fellows.

With sudden fury the Mattersdorfers would learn that the "foggy-heads" of Eisenstadt declared that in Mattersdorf the marriage portion was presented by the bridegroom in front of a mirror, so it should seem larger than it really was. Or that the people of Frauenkirchen, the "Jays," were whispering that the Mattersdorfers had stolen a warship and were selling it as firewood. But the Mattersdorfers were not to be outdone ; they could be trusted to revenge themselves with interest on the first opportunity.

Local politics, too, were exhaustively discussed, and the town council (familiarily known as the "Bottleneck") was left without a rag of reputation.

Since Mattersdorf, not only the religious community, but the whole Jewish town, on the strength of the princely privilege, was politically independent, the town council, that maid-of-all-work, was responsible for everything—police, taxation, the administration of the law, the care of the poor, the health of the community, the fire brigade, and much beside, quite apart from its religious duties.

Not only had the State taxes to be collected, such as the industrial tax, known as the "Pardon," the alehouse impost, the meat tax, and the onerous contribution especially imposed upon the Jews by their amiable sovereign, Maria Theresa, and known by the innocent name of the "Tolerance Tax," but Prince Esterházy could not be allowed to go empty-handed. To him went the aliens tax, the poll-tax, the tax for the upkeep of his regiments, ground rents and house rents, and various land and house duties. All these sums were rounded off with an additional " Y

Gift," not to mention the fact that anyone who made even the shortest journey had to provide himself with turnpike tolls and customs dues and the various local imposts.

But, after all, the Jews were accustomed to thousands of years of deprivation, imposition and endurance, and now they were thankful at least for the opportunity of enjoying their frugal lives in comparative liberty.

To appreciate this freedom, one has to realise that during the same period the Jews in other European countries—nay, even in other Austrian and Hungarian provinces—were still living enclosed behind walls, confined to Ghettos. They were distinguished from the burgesses by dress-regulations and Jew-badges, and made pariahs, separated by language and custom. Petty bye-laws, ordering married and widowed men to wear beards, were devised only to torment them, and the "body tax" singled out these wretches, degrading them to the status of merchandise or cattle.

All this the Jews were spared under the Esterházy's, and therefore everything possible was done to retain the favour of the princely protector. The town council did its utmost to avoid all causes of friction, watched over the observance of the numerous points and prescriptions of the privilege, and ensured, by its compliant attitude in all disputes with the townsfolk and peasantry, that it was rarely necessary to make use of the right of appeal to the Prince. Only serious crimes were referred to external authority; all others were dealt with inside the community. Disputes were adjusted, offences were punished, and the "Kotter," as the prison was impolitely called, together with the pillory that stood in the forecourt of the synagogue, was enough to keep the community in the paths of righteousness.

Fugitives had to be accommodated, or at least entertained, the sick had to be nursed, and the dead buried, and provision had to be made for maintaining cleanliness and order. The Jewish fire brigade was the subject of many jests; nevertheless, it was so well equipped that it survived until comparatively recent times.

Rabbis, musicians, and Hasidim ("the godly ones") did not escape the trenchant criticism of the barber's club, although the town council went to considerable expense in the matter of appointing scholars of distinction and good singers.

Their merits were openly discussed by the chorus of critics, but there were also whispered comments on matters which were not suitable for public exposition.

Not faith alone is strengthened by distress and affliction; they often nourish those fungoid growths of religion, superstition and occultism. In the abysmal depths of hopeless misery the persecuted console themselves with fairy-tales and wishful dreams. From

Turkey came the news that a new Messiah, Sabbatai Sebi, had arisen, and his adherents, the Sabbateans, were numerous. The immemorial ghost stories and magical legends of the Kabbala were revived. The Rabbi Emden accused the well-known Rabbi Jonathan Eybenschutz of the improper distribution of amulets. The dispute continued for years, disturbing the whole of Jewry, and the outward-circling ripples of controversy reached even the smallest community. As in the case of Jacob Frank, who afterwards went over to the Catholics, and his disciples, all sorts of people were observed to be wearing amulets with magical texts and crosses on their naked bodies, or were at least suspected of doing so. It was a time of secret suspicions and injurious whispers and calumnies. Even my great-great-grandfather, Simon Lasar, the butcher, is said to have appeared in the suit which Eybenschutz brought against Emden.

But other than mystical matters were discussed in secret. People whispered, with malicious smiles, that Maria Theresa was beginning to feel anxious; what was old Fritz of Prussia going to do? Or they spoke of her simple Court, or of the sixteen children who were such an expense. Of her husband, Francis Stephen of Lorraine and Tuscany, who, despite his fine title of "Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire," was no more than a figurehead—and one that needed frequent regilding. They spoke of his favourites too, and, above all, people whispered about the heir to the throne, that Joseph who was to be so persecuted by Fate.

In 1765, despite all the efforts of the Court physicians, Francis Stephen, known as the Emperor Francis the First, was laid to rest in the crypt of the Capucins, and his son Joseph was crowned in Frankfort with the crown of the Holy Roman Empire, receiving the title of Emperor Joseph II. Amidst the throng of onlookers was the sixteen-year-old Johann Wolfgang Goethe, who made some very disparaging comments on the "carnival procession," which found their way into literature. At home in Vienna, however, beside his masterful mother, who would listen to none but her Wenceslas Kaunitz, Joseph had no say in anything, and was kept in the background. His position was much like that of Edward VII during the lifetime of Queen Victoria. But he at least was able to amuse himself, whereas Joseph had little taste for such diversions.

He admired and imitated his mother's mortal enemy, Frederick the Great, and Maria Theresa was infuriated by his attitude. However, there was little that she could do with the "blockhead," as she called him. He did at least marry, in accordance with her wishes, Isabelle of Bourbon, since with her, as he told his mother, he could imitate his beloved model in San Souci—he could enter into a political mock marriage. But in actual fact he did nothing the

sort, he fell head over ears in love with his own wife, and to his great delight, and that of the imperial grandmother, a daughter was born to him. But in the third year of their marriage Isabelle died of smallpox. Again obeying his mother's orders, Joseph married Princess Josepha of Bavaria, and with her, who was totally different to him, he lived in a mock marriage, now really copying his Prussian idol. But his second wife was swept away by the same fatal virus as was the beloved Isabelle. Tragically enough, no news had reached the young emperor, so interested in medical progress, of the successful vaccination experiments carried out by the then still unknown Gloucester doctor, Edward Jenner, nor of the Dorsetshire farmer Jetsy, who had already saved so many lives.

To the great tribulation of the people of Eisenstadt, in 1766 the building of the castle of Esterháza, at Suttor on the Neusiedler See, was completed, and the Prince's household was removed thither from the former residence. Miklos the Magnificent had realised his dream of Versailles, a dream which had cost him, up to that date, 11,000,000 gulden. Although the marshy site of the castle was pestiferous, and although it was some decades before it was made habitable by drainage canals, which swallowed up another fortune, the castle was among the finest of its time.

It had 162 rooms, a portico in white marble, covered terraces, a theatre with a roomy stage and 500 seats, grottoes, a marionette theatre, and an orangery, ornamental grounds, and woodland rides many miles in extent. Nothing was lacking. The rooms, overfilled with Indian, Japanese and Chinese *objets d'art*, the galleries, with their masterpieces of the Dutch and Italian old masters, and the library, with its choice editions and its collection of engravings and woodcuts, drew admiring visitors from far and near.

Miklos II was forever building, altering and improving, and above all he applied himself to bringing his operatic performances and concerts to the highest pitch of perfection. Haydn was worked hard but, on the other hand, his every wish was divined and fulfilled.

Fetes of unprecedented magnificence were organised, for which the visits of the Empress, the Archdukes, and Prince Rohan were sufficient occasion.

Since Maria Theresa disliked the jolting of the State coach on the uneven highroad, Esterházy, one summer, on the occasion of a visit from the Empress, had an artificial sledge road, some miles in length, covered with salt. Over this her sledge was drawn by twelve footmen disguised as satyrs. She complained that there were no resting places in the forest, whereupon a pavilion was built at the cost of 200,000 gulden. After the Empress had remarked that this sum was a bagatelle for the Prince, he called the pavilion "The Bagatelle."

Meanwhile the nominal co-sovereign, Joseph II, was travelling about the country, and what he saw filled him with dismay.

A man of exceptional intelligence, reared in the severely Catholic, bigoted atmosphere of the Viennese Court, knowing little of the world, but too clever not to realise that he had been trained in blinkers, he sought to overcome the defects of his education by sheer diligence and strength of will. Life had used him hardly, and his ambitions were repressed by his despotic mother, so that he learned to keep silence and to distrust his fellow-creatures. The death of his beloved wife, already lost to him through her unnatural affection for his own sister, seemed the deliberate blow of Fate.

His ideal was Frederick the Great, the strangest mixture of the most brutal and militaristic Prussianism, the crassest reaction, and the modern French spirit; a musician (he was the composer of the famous Hohenfriedberg march), who had his soldiers beaten almost to death for a grease-spot on a uniform, while he himself, a slovenly Bohemian, grimed with snuff and tobacco, often spent his days alone but for the company of his dogs. Owing to the circumstances of his marriage and his lack of children he was surrounded by a tissue of calumnious or compassionate rumours, while his successors provided him with an undeserved halo. A royal eccentric, "Old Fritz."

Joseph imitated and revered him, or at all events believed that he did so, perhaps only with the subconscious intention of repaying his Imperial mother, who hated the old man like the plague for what he had made her suffer.

As he travelled about the country, and sought, with increasing dismay, to see and hear yet more, he endeavoured to come into contact with all classes of society. He crept into the lice-ridden cells of the prisons, which were conducted with horrible cruelty and maladministration; he inspected the filthy hospitals, and visited the nobility on their own estates, in their own castles; he spoke with enslaved bondmen, who were starving while their lords were squandering millions.

He sought out the urban populations in their cities, and surveyed their institutions; he discovered that the laws of the land were not functioning, and that denials of justice and untold misery were being caused by the adjournment of lawsuits for years and decades.

It is difficult to determine how far the reports of his Haroun-al-Raschid disguises are based on truth or on fable. At all events, he saw and heard more than was agreeable to many of his subjects.

He observed the Jews also. He had little liking for them, and even less understanding; a fact explained by his Catholic education. They were so alien and so unimportant that it did not seem worth while to try to understand them, yet he knew that their commercial

abilities, highly trained by thousands of years of trade and negotiation, since all other callings were closed to them, were now lying fallow, while the idle townsfolk were neglecting commerce and industry, to the detriment of the State.

He sent memoir after memoir to Vienna: reports of the conditions he had observed, and warnings, but to little effect. He feared Prussia, whose finances were sound, whose army was a pattern of excellence, and he was anxious to avoid any complications in the quarter, at all events during his coming reign. Joseph therefore decided to make the personal acquaintance of his idol, and at the same time to take the bull by the horns.

After protracted preparation and intrigue and negotiation the two men met in 1769. With characteristic lack of breeding Frederick insisted that the meeting should take place in Silesia, the province which, as Maria Theresa complained, the old man had *stolen from her*.

Joseph spoke with enthusiasm of friendship and disarmament; Frederick was polite and reserved, and since he trusted neither Joseph nor his mother, he gave secret orders that the army should be put on a war footing.

The language spoken at this conference was the most exemplary French. The two sovereigns could not divine that at this moment, on August 15, at Ajaccio in Corsica, one Letitia Ramolini, wife of the attorney Carlo Buonaparte, was announcing in less exemplary French, to her husband, the birth of a very feeble and remarkably yellow male child, a child that cried and clenched its fists, kicked in the manner of sucklings, and duly performed its other biological functions. His birth, even had they been aware of it, would have been a matter of supreme indifference to the now greatly disillusioned *half-Emperor and the tired old King of Prussia*. And had anyone prophesied that the regular functioning of the organs of the attorney's brat might be of significance for the future of Europe, the notion would have been received with sceptical amusement, and the prophet would have been laughed to scorn.

Joseph returned home, in agreement now with his mother's far from flattering opinion of his once revered model. But the very next year the old king had to consent to another visit from the "young man," as he called Joseph, and since this time serious issues were at stake, the latter was accompanied by the faithful servant, Wenzeslas Kaunitz, who though he bore a name that would have befitted a Prague door-porter, was created a prince for the occasion of this visit.

In the meantime . . . Maria's position had been greatly . . . and by the marriage of Maria Theresa's favourite daughter, Marie Antoinette,

to the Dauphin of France, the future Louis XVI. In honour of his guests, Frederick appeared in a white uniform, on which the stains of snuff were plainly visible, and he was now much more accessible to Joseph's ideas, in so far as they served his own purpose.

In Poland the civil war was raging, there was little prospect of gaining anything by a war between Prussia and Austria, so the plan was concocted—which had the entire sympathy of Catherine II of Russia—of dividing a defeated Poland between Russia, Austria and Prussia.

Well content with the success of the conference, Joseph returned home, to find that his only child, a daughter, nine years of age, had died in his absence.

The sands continued to trickle through the hourglass of history. Battles were fought, civil wars were waged, revolutions broke out, and the princes of the earth sought by violence to ward off the spirit of the new age which was knocking at the door. Despite the storms that were raging in the outer world, and the antisemitic policy of Maria Theresa, the Seven Communes, under the protecting care of Esterházy, flourished like plants in a hothouse. In Mattersdorf life followed its usual course; men laboured and rejoiced, children were brought into the world, and the old people slowly made their way toward the little burial ground. In the barber's shop gossip was exchanged and anecdotes were related, and although the news from Eisenstadt was petty and unexciting now that the Prince had removed to Esterháza, there had been little change in Mattersdorf itself. But the Mattersdorfers were secretly delighted that the "foggy folk" who had always made so much of themselves on account of their princely neighbour could now learn only by hearsay of the splendours of his little court. They were no longer able to boast that in the "Angel" at Eisenstadt, which was now patronised only by the simple moorland farmers, they could sit down beside Papa Haydn himself. One could see the Mattersdorfers positively swelling with delighted malice; the women too, as they washed their linen in the Vulka brook, not far from Simon Lasar's slaughter-house and butcher's shop.

Thanks to the town council, the butcher had no easy time. His prices were controlled by a municipal commission; he could not even cut up a carcase until its value had been estimated, and he must not sell the meat at a higher price than the Christian butchers. In order to find less exacting customers the Mattersdorf butchers often visited the markets of Pest and Ofen. It was a long and tiring journey thither, and a dangerous one, owing to the prevalence of highwaymen or *Betyárs*.¹ The Bakonyer forest, a hilly tract of country, extending nearly from the Danube to the north and south, was

¹ Literally translated: Rascals.

with thick woods, afforded shelter to these bands of robbers. This district of Hungary was generally infested with them, and only in quite recent days, after the government had taken serious steps, by employing large forces of soldiers and gendarmes, were their activities checked.

Innumerable are the tales which have been told of Subri Jóska Angyal Bandi, Zold Márci, Rozsa Sándor and others, who played a big part in the romantic imagination of the people. They had or at least were credited with, many of the notions of wild justice which rendered Robin Hood, Dick Turpin, and Captain Rock so dear to the recollection of British people. To rob from the rich and give the poor, to punish the strong and protect the weak, to ill-treat proud men and behave with gallantry to pretty women—such are the characteristics attributed to the great robbers of Hungary and other countries all the world over. Their traits have filled the songs of peasantry with their names and deeds, and have tended to make them popular.

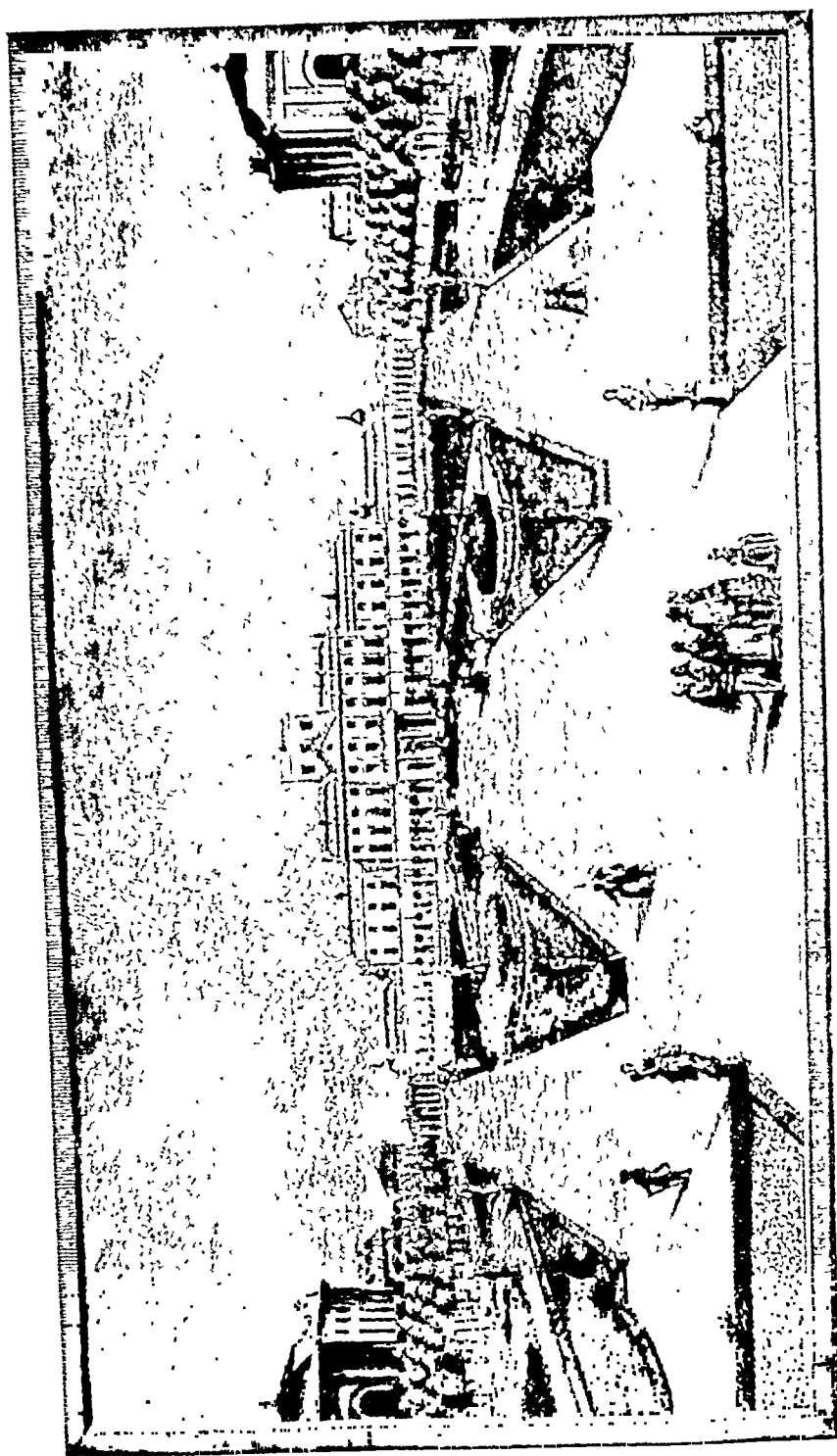
There was, however, a special cause here, which made them the more congenial. They were mostly young men taken by the press-gangs for soldiers, and who, after running away, had no other means of existence left.

The mode of raising the conscripts was so brutal that it was impossible not to pity those who were exposed to it. When the county had issued its orders to the under-officers to raise the required number of men, they proceeded to the villages and commenced a levy by main force. When once caught, these poor fellows were chained in long lines, and thus literally driven, more cruelly than the same men would treat their own beasts, to the headquarters of the army. It is not to be wondered at that a service so recruited should be detested, or that the men should try to escape. The highwaymen were called in Hungary "szegény-legény" ("poor fellows") for this reason alone.

Travellers from these parts to the Eastern provinces used the Vienna-Odenburg road which traversed the Burgenland, passing quite near Mattersdorf, and leading into the Győr-Ofen post-road, where the "Royal diligence" made its way. This was the most expensive mode of travelling, and apart from the aristocracy and the very rich who travelled in their own private coaches, it was used by the wealthier classes only.

The post-boys wore huge cocked hats, each with a plume of feathers worthy of a field-marshal, and red coats with purple facings. They blew their horns with gusto, and drove four or six large, strong horses with great skill at the rate of about five miles per hour.

The journey from Mattersdorf to Ofen took, under normal



THE PALACE AT ESTERHÁZA, 1766



WAHRE GEGENFACHT DER STADT OLEN UND FEIST, WIE KJ VON DEN CHRISTEN BELAGERT WURDEN ANNO 1654

conditions, with frequent change of horses, and not travelling at night, three to four days. The "Express Post" could make the same distance, about 155 miles, in half the time, but then one had to take all the risks which were involved in night journeys.

The middle and poorer classes used, and still use, a low, four-wheeled waggon, exceedingly light, sometimes furnished with a seat hung on leathern springs, at others stuffed only with a heap of straw, on which the master sat with an air of considerable dignity, and always smoking. The hinder part of the waggon was commonly filled with hay for provender on the journey. Every peasant seemed to possess one of these waggons, and drove it with two or four horses.

Others use the "Leiter-Wagen" or ladder-waggon, so called from the similarity which its sides bear to a ladder. These vehicles are not only deficient in springs, but they often have not even a particle of iron about them, so that it is impossible to conceive by what means they hold together. They are gifted, however, with the singular power of bending about like a snake, and as one wheel mounts a bank, while the other falls into a pit, the body accommodates itself, by a few gentle contortions, to these various positions, without in any way deranging itself or its contents.

The peasants between the frontiers of Hungary and Pest, on this great highroad from Vienna, combined to supply relays of horses at a cheaper rate and faster than the royal post, and though at first opposed by the Government, they eventually succeeded so well that for a considerable period the whole line was supplied almost exclusively by this "Peasant-post."

A contemporary English traveller describes his impressions: "The pace which these men with their four small horses take on a light Vienna carriage is something wonderful, especially when the length of some of their stages is considered. The last stage cannot be less than forty miles from Pest, and with a short pause of about a quarter of an hour to water, they do it for the most part at full gallop, and with the same horses, in four hours. It is glorious to see the wild-looking driver, his long black hair floating in the wind as he turns round to ask your admiration when his four little clean-boned nags are rattling over hill and hollow in a style which, for the first time since he left home, shakes an Englishman's blood into quicker circulation. There is certainly a pleasure in rapid motion which has on some men almost an intoxicating effect."

Government officials and officers, when travelling on duty, had the privilege in Austria-Hungary of using the "Vorspann" or express post. An order or "assignation," signed by the magistrate or other authorised person, gave the right to demand relays of peasants' horses at certain indicated places, and, on their showing

it, it became the duty of the village officers to see that the demand was attended to. This favour, which should have been granted to the military only, or those travelling in the interest of the public, became, especially in the distant parts of the Empire, the most usual way of travelling, and owing to its cheapness people used it under all kinds of pretexts. A stage of about ten English miles, with four horses, was paid for at the rate of five kreutzers, that is two-pence, per horse. As before long almost all travelling was effected by means of peasants' horses, this became one of the greatest grievances of the peasantry. To check this abuse the counties increased the charge to non-official persons, and as good tips had to be given to obtain decent horses, the "Vorspann" ceased to be an oppression, except in harvest time. In winter, when the peasant had little for his team to do, it was eagerly sought after, and in time developed into the famous "Peasant-post."

The fortunate traveller in possession of a "Vorspann" order handed this to the village judge, or in larger communities, to the "Hajduk." The village judge was sometimes appointed by the lord of the district, or elected by the peasants themselves. He had no fixed salary, received only occasional fees, and was pleased to get a few pence, which were given to him if he had been expeditious in procuring the horses. The judge was easily known by his carrying a stick, the most common, most expressive, and the most useful badge of power amongst a rude people. But he was so little respected that he always ran the risk of being thrashed with his own symbol of authority, particularly by the military, if he did not exert himself sufficiently.

The Hajduk was a town officer, answering pretty much to our description of a constable, but instead of a simple uniform he wore a very smart hussar outfit, had a long sabre at his side, and lavish plumes in his *tschako*. His usual ensign of office, like that of the judge, was a stout hazel stick, of which most of the peasants under his influence knew the weight and force. Like other petty officials, these judges and Hajduks had all the humble subservience to superiors, all the insolence and cruelty to inferiors, which characterised the race everywhere.

The roads were bad. Serfdom compelled the peasants to pay rents and other dues in personal services, and the burthen of keeping the highways and bridges in good order weighed heavily on the labourer whose bread depended upon his daily toil. Every individual flung down upon the road the portion of rubbish (for it was often nothing better) which he was forced to contribute, and he naturally deposited there the material which he could most readily obtain, and thus the highway generally resembled a piece of rude patchwork, without method or continuity. In summer insufferable

dust, and in the rainy seasons of autumn, or when the spring melted snow and ice, a sea of mud, covered the post-road.

The bridges were very little better, save where the width of the river and the traffic on the road enforced a greater degree of care. But even in the vicinity of large cities they were in most cases built merely of planks laid transversely upon stout beams, which rested on wooden piles or lines of barges. Unsecured by a single nail, quivering and creaking beneath the wheels of the carriage in a manner by no means agreeable to the unaccustomed traveller, they seemed to be ready to collapse on the passage of the next vehicle.

This country is well cultivated ; it is chiefly cornland, but maize is grown and there is some pasture ; towards the north it gradually becomes more uneven. Its gentle gradients fit it for the vine, which is planted on the banks exposed to the sun. Terraced vineyards cover the modest range dignified by the name of the Leitha Mountains, and in spring the stakes which will support the vine under its autumnal load are driven into the soil, giving the whole scene a characteristic, orderly aspect. Among the vines there are a great many standard peach trees, which, when in bloom, fill the air with their fragrance.

The main road winds from Ödenburg along the south end of the Neusiedler See, and soon the Hansag bog comes in sight. From this a considerable number of leeches were collected, and sent to certain centres, where they remained in tanks until the French and German leech-merchants arrived and transported them by post-carriages to Paris and Hamburg.

The villages which one passes are clean and very neat. The peasant houses are all uniform, and they line a very broad and long village street. They are composed of the same material which nature taught the house-martin to select for his nest, and out of which he forms his solid dwelling. It is a kind of clay, which is mixed with straw. These mud walls are very warm and durable, and so are the thatched roofs, which are kept in good repair. The white-washed walls glare in the sunshine, and the symmetrical rows of houses, spaced with mathematical accuracy, with no pavement and no fence to separate them from the fields, give the community rather the appearance of a tented camp of nomads than a village.

Raab, also known as Györ, is the next large town on the way, well built, with a fine old Cathedral, and from here the road leads through Tata, the residence of a Count Esterházy, down to the Danube, and to what was called the Komorn flying bridge. If one does not cross the river to Komorn, but proceeds along the left bank, the flat land is presently agreeably broken by a low range of hills, which follow the north branch of the stream for a considerable distance. Then Gran, known as Esztergom to the

Magyars, the birthplace of St Stephen, the patron saint and first King of Hungary, comes into view. It is the seat of the Archbishop or "Prince primate," and is perhaps the richest see in Europe casting the revenues of Canterbury or Durham, even in their best days, into the shade. Luxuriant vineyards come up almost to its streets, and surround many of the suburban houses.

Twelve miles from here, on a rock, descending steeply into the Danube, stands the ruined fortress of Vissegrad, once the Windsor of several kings of Hungary. Between this and the little village on the banks of the river lies the castle, which Matthias Corvinus converted into what in his day was called "an earthly paradise." But this castle has seen more bloodshed than the Tower of London. It was the prison of two of Hungary's kings, and the death place of several others. Here, known as the Congress of Vissegrad, the sovereigns of Poland, Bohemia, Moravia and Bosnia came together in the beginning of the fourteenth century, concluded a treaty with Charles the First of Hungary, settled their own differences, and hatched out new plans of aggression.

As the last stage of the journey to Ofen started here, travellers often spent the night in Gran or Vissegrad. The British naturalist Robert Townson, who visited this part of Europe towards the end of the eighteenth century, writes in his delightful travel book "I had no right to expect a good inn, but I got a room to myself, a comfortable thing in a thronged hedge ale house. It was one that served for brewhouse, lumber room, and pantry, but alas, a pantry *degarnie*! As my landlady could give me nothing to eat, she gave me a double portion of feather beds to cover myself with. It was a very warm night. It is a very great inconvenience in Hungary and Germany, that instead of sheets, blankets and quilts, a light kind of feather bed is used, this is always too short, and the same being used in summer as in winter, the traveller has no remedy, if he finds himself too hot, but to get on the outside of it, and so have no covering at all. It is likewise a cause of dirtiness, as the upper sheet is sewn on to the under part of this feather bed, or, what is more common, the feather bed is put into a dark coloured case, and then no upper sheet is used, but this contrivance saves the chambermaid a deal of trouble.

"Fleas are as good as 'larum clocks, they awake us as soon as the wants of nature are supplied, and then make us quit the bed of indolence. Through their incessant admonitions I was up with the sun, and when I stepped out of my ale house I was charmed with the beauty of the scenery which surrounded me."

How right was Townson! The view one has from these hills will compensate for the greatest inconvenience of the primitive guest houses, as far as the eye can reach into Hungary a vast plain

extends, through which the gigantic Danube spreads itself. Sometimes dividing into several branches, nearly as wide as the parent stream, it forms large islands several miles in extent; then, collecting its scattered forces, it moves forward in one huge mass of irresistible power, till division again impairs its strength.

The last of these islands before one comes to Buda lies only a few miles from here, where the Danube bends sharply towards the south. It is the island of St. Andrae. The town of the same name is not situated on the island itself, but on this side of the river. The road now winds through many small villages, and finally reaches O-Buda (Old Ofen), the suburb of the metropolis of Hungary.

But just as the modern traveller is struck, when first reaching London *via* Liverpool Street station, by its milk-cans and its not too impressive platforms, so the expectant wayfarer was disillusioned when he arrived in Buda from the West.

There were no fortifications, nor even gates to this city, and one entered it as one entered any village. The first thing observable was its poverty and filthiness, and the fact that it was very long and narrow. It was narrow because the Danube was on the left of it, while the hills prevented the development of the town on the right.

When Simon Lasar, the butcher, arrived in O-Buda, he was much too tired after the long journey to proceed at once to the market-place in Pest. Moreover, a Jew was not allowed to spend the night there, for the city prided itself on the fact that it had long ago driven out the last remnant of these pariahs; and so did Ofen, whence they had last been expelled in 1746. But they could find harbourage in Old Ofen, where the Countess Elisabeth Zichy had followed the example of Esterházy, and a large Jewish community was flourishing there. In Old Ofen a Jew could find a bed, and no one would prevent him from practising his religion. One could also have a Turkish bath, without the restrictions which were imposed upon the Jews by the council of Ofen.

Why the Turks have been credited with this form of bathing is not quite clear. They were only the revivers of a practice introduced by the Romans in these parts of Europe. But it really did not need much introduction, as the hundreds of hot and cold springs, many of them flowing into natural basins, were inviting enough for a dip. The Romans, and later the Pashas, erected more or less luxurious bath-houses over these thermal waters.

Townson's experiences are worthy of mention. He writes: "There are large common baths for the lower order of the people, and commodious private baths for those who can pay for them. In common baths I saw young men and maidens, old men and children, some in a state of nature, others with a fig-leaf covering,

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flouncing about like fish in spawning time But the observer must be just I saw none of the ladies without a petticoat, though most were without their shifts Some of the gentlemen were with drawers, some without, according, no doubt, to their degree of delicacy, and as they thought themselves favoured by nature or not. But no very voluptuous ideas arise in these suffocating humid steams, and as further sedative, the surgeon is seen hard at work, cupping and scarifying "

John Paget, another Englishman, who travelled extensively in Hungary a few years later, and even settled there for good, mentions in one of his books " Here as well bathing in society is the established mode The peasants follow the example of their betters, but in ruder fashion, for they dispense with all covering on these occasions The poor despised Jews are not allowed to bath with the other inhabitants, but they are more decent in their arrangements, and separate the sexes "

On a Wednesday, January 20, in the year 1778, something occurred which for me quite overshadows the historical fact that at about the same time Louis XVI of France concluded a pact with the Republicans to fight against England in North America

Jetty, the wife of Simon Lasar, was delivered of a healthy boy, to whom his proud parents, following the ancient custom, gave the name of his maternal grandfather, Wolf This Wolf junior was my great grandfather, which is why the occasion has such importance for me

On his next visit to the market Simon Lasar, as he sought a lodging for the night in Old Ofen, had already made up his mind that young Wolf, when he grew up, should spend his lucrative days within reach of the fleshpots of Pest and Ofen As it turned out, coming events were greatly to facilitate the fulfilment of this plan

CHAPTER III

A LIBERAL DESPOT

ALTHOUGH the carving up of Poland was effected smoothly enough, Maria Theresa had to sing small, and to suffer one of the greatest humiliations of her life, when Frederick II mobilised for the war of the Bavarian Succession. It was a poor consolation for her that "her Joseph," travelling under the name of Count Falkenstein, had visited his sister Marie Antoinette amidst the splendours of Versailles, and that a few months after this trip to Paris he had a very successful conference with Catherine of Russia, in Moscow.

In November of that same year, 1780, the Empress, of whom Frederick, her sarcastic and deadly enemy, had said that "this woman is the ablest man in Austria," closed her eyes for ever, and was laid to rest beside her husband in the little vault in the *Kapuzinergruft*.

She was, with all her faults and human weaknesses, one of the most outstanding personalities of her age, and exerted, indirectly, the greatest influence over the whole of Europe, by shaping the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Her letters to Marie Antoinette and others reveal exceptional mental qualities, a shrewd mind, and a clear understanding of human nature. A first-class diplomatist, she knew how to choose her advisers, but ruled as an autocrat, almost entirely by royal edict. Taking every advantage of her sex, as one of the most beautiful women of her time she exploited her charm in her youth, and in her later years she triumphed through her experience, refinement and cunning.

At last, at the age of thirty-nine, Joseph II assumed the sovereignty which he had so long shared with his mother. That is, she had ruled, and he had been obliged to hold his tongue.

The spate of decrees, ordinances and reforms of the monarchy which he now issued was like the release of the dammed-up waters of a river. Those orders of his which made sweeping changes numbered two hundred and seventy-one in less than three years, while the minor ones were too many to be counted.

To the utter dismay of the nobility, his first step was to abolish serfdom, the death penalty, and torture. This latter step was a very great achievement, if one considers the spirit of the times, and especially Maria Theresa's sadistic instructions to the law courts.

By all the means at his disposal he endeavoured to rectify the finances of the State, and, always with an eye on the old man at

Potsdam, still haunted by his inferiority complex, he strengthened the army. But he made himself many enemies among the higher officers, by having too much regard for the well being of the common soldier. His activities were mostly designed with defensive intentions, which did not, however, mean that he lacked imperialistic ambitions.

For no sentimental or humanitarian reasons, but only to strengthen the State, this rigid Catholic, on October 19, 1781, issued the famous Edict of Toleration. This abolition of restrictions on the practice of religion was directed in the first place against the Church, for although Joseph, despite his atheistical talk, was very religious, he was even more strongly anti clerical. The measure was highly remunerative. Directly, as it meant the confiscation of monastic property (he suppressed several hundred monasteries and convents), and indirectly, in that the Jews, who now received permission to reside in the towns, by devoting themselves to trade and industry, effected a great improvement in the latter.

But whatever his motives were, economical or otherwise, he restored to the Jews the dignity which human beings deserve, by cancelling all dress regulations, and abolishing the body tax and the special legislative measures introduced by his predecessors. He did this when the most enlightened rulers of his day were in this connection still blind and reactionary.

Everything Joseph had learned upon his journeys was now given practical effect. He reformed the prisons and founded orphanages. The Vienna General Hospital was solely his creation, and one can hardly exaggerate the importance of the establishment of a school of medicine on such a scale for human progress in general. He realised the urgency of hygiene, appointed district medical officers, maternity nurses, and superintendents of pharmacies. In some respects he was a hundred years in advance of his times, and many of his sanitary reforms have a curiously modern character, while in his own days they must have seemed the dreams of a Utopian.

Even though his strategical abilities were less developed, he was as a reformer far in advance of Bonaparte. His civil law was exemplary, and in many points a model for the Code Napoléon. At the same time, actuated by distrust, he expanded the secret police until it became an intolerable system of espionage. His plain clothes agents, recruited from all social strata, known as *Confidants* or *Nachrager*, with their subterranean methods of censorship, etc., were unfortunately resuscitated, almost without modification, by the Gestapo and OGPU of our own day.

He was a most diligent and painstaking sovereign, and yet, owing to his unfortunate temperament, he met with nothing but disappointment. The nationalities hated him for his favourite project

of combining his vast possessions under one uniform government by centralising the administration, and putting all Crown Lands on a footing of equality. He tried to create an Austrian nation out of a heterogeneous conglomerate, a racial, linguistic, and religious medley of nations, by forcing German on them as a *lingua franca*, and decreeing that within three years all public business should be transacted in this language.

The Hungarians had a special grievance against him because he refused to be crowned in Hungary, and removed the sacred crown of St. Stephen to Vienna. This earned him the nickname of the "hatted king." Others loathed him simply out of mutual jealousy, or because he attacked them for restricting his absolute power. The nobles disliked him for curtailing their privileges, and even those whom he had only recently liberated, becoming conscious, after the comparative ease of their down-at-heel, long-accustomed slippers, of the uncomfortable pressure of their new boots, did not love Joseph.

In Rome his anti-clerical decrees had the effect of a stick thrust into a wasp's nest. The Papal Nuncio to Vienna put forward a petition and sought an interview with the Emperor. It was refused.

Pope Pius VI realised the seriousness of the situation, and went in person to Vienna—an unprecedented event. The Catholic city was beside itself; the bells—the Church's artillery, as Joseph called them—pealed and thundered, but the Emperor kept his head. The secret conversation between Emperor and Pope, at which no witnesses were present, did not seem to have been very amicable, to judge by their heated faces as they took leave of each other.

In the same year was issued the educational decree which required the Jews to establish schools. The first such school to be founded in Hungary was "the German School of the Jewish Community of Mattersdorf." It was opened at the instigation of a Count Esterházy, who was entrusted with the execution of the educational law in this County. Mattersdorf, strongly influenced by its proximity to Vienna, was one of the most intelligent communities in the country, and when the school was established the schoolmaster appointed was Peter Beer, afterwards well known as an author. Since he was teaching there until 1785 my great-grandfather must have spent his first few years at school under his care.

The communities lavished great pains on the establishment of these schools, not only because they were fully convinced of the importance of these institutions, but also in order to win the favour of the Emperor. It would seem, from contemporary accounts, that the founders of the schools were hopefully convinced that the news of their achievements "would be sure to get into the papers,"

and they were naïve enough to believe that this would make a great impression on Joseph

The Jewish community of Mattersdorf took a lively interest in the schools, and in the early days various members of the town council were seen to stand beneath the windows of the schoolhouse, manifesting their satisfaction with the "professor's" activities by their beaming faces and approving clicks of the tongue.

But the interest in the schools quickly abated, especially when it was realised what they would cost the community, and the authorities often had to intervene in order to prevent the complete decay of these once so admired institutions

The Emperor Joseph was troubled, and his health began to decline. The war against Turkey, fought in alliance with Russia, was unsuccessful, and Frederick the Great united all the German princes against the Habsburg. This was the final blow struck by the old king against Maria Theresa's son, and even the death of the bitterest enemy of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy did not greatly affect the situation. Joseph II was already too weary, sick, and disillusioned to adopt energetic measures. He was genuinely interested only in domestic affairs, and confined himself to scraping and polishing the fabric of his State.

In July 1787 it was decreed that every Jew who did not yet possess a family name must adopt a "German" name and register it with the authorities. The Jews in most cases made use of a personal name only, with the addition of the father's or the other's personal name, and often subjoining the town or village of their domicile. My great grandfather was therefore known as Wolf, son of Simon Lasar of Mattersdorf. His mother called herself Gittl or Jetty, daughter of Wolf.

But as Austria-Hungary was a "Police Empire," and the civil servants loved making records and lists, all this nomenclature had now to be reduced to order, and anyone who did not punctually register a family name with the competent authority had a name imposed on him by the not invariably benevolent officials. First all the colours of the rainbow, the trades and occupations, the names of countries and towns or provinces were utilised. Translations of Hebrew names were sometimes chosen, or, to the annoyance of the victim, the most incredible compounds and nicknames were employed. Zoology and botany, the days of the week, adjectives and numbers, all had to assist in this operation. Only the "Jewish nobility," the descendants of the priestly lines of the Levites and the Cohenites, were allowed, as a special privilege, to call themselves Cohen, Kohn or Levy.

In the beginning, the Jews took little account of the whole affair, and many even regarded it as a kind of joke. Only a few realised

the consequences for the coming generations, and these afforded the officials an opportunity of earning considerable sums of money, bribing them in order to obtain a "nice" name.

But human beings are conservative, and even when Simon Lasar and his family were registered under the name of Weiss (White), or, in the Hungarian spelling, Vajsz, he and my great-grandfather called themselves during their lifetime, in the old-fashioned way, Wolf son of Simon Lasar of Mattersdorf, or for short, Wolf Mattersdorf, making use of the colour foisted upon them only in official documents.

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Joseph II was now seriously ill. The Crown-lands of Holland and Belgium were in revolt, the Turks had renewed their attacks, and terrible news was arriving from allied France. The Bastille, this symbol of aristocratic power, had been stormed. Joseph's sister, Marie Antoinette, and his brother-in-law, Louis XVI, had been interned in the Tuileries by the revolutionary populace, and the whole country was in a blaze.

The Emperor was hardly able to drag himself about. He was tormented with grief and pain, and preferred to spend his days in solitude. His minister Kaunitz, whom he did not see for two years, refused to visit his sick-room. And yet—for he was barely forty-nine years of age—the man whom misfortune had robbed of wife, child, and friends, longed for a little youth and the warmth of affection. At the court of Vienna there was living his nephew Francis of Tuscany, with his young wife, Elizabeth of Württemberg. To her he turned with all the love and tenderness that still remained to him.

Premonitions of death haunted him, and the Emperor, whom contemporaries labelled a rationalist and an enlightened despot, longed to make his peace with the Church. The weakened will in this sick body gave way, and on January 28, 1790, he revoked all his reforms from his sick-bed.

No one was allowed to see him in this condition. But in spite of the strictest orders his niece Elizabeth refused to be turned away, and on February 15, being then in an advanced state of pregnancy, she made her way to his bedside. Shocked by the appearance of Joseph, she was carried out of the room unconscious, and after giving birth to a still-born child she herself died.

This was the last dread news broken to Joseph II. Death was now a merciful release, and five days later this unceasing wayfarer, who had ruled the Empire mostly from a travelling coach, ended his wanderings for good.

He was the most dictatorial, but also the most brilliant of the

Habsburgs Almost all his objects were great and good, but his means of execution mostly bad Joseph II came near to making a revolution when only reforms were needed Certain it is that he was far in advance of the people he governed, and few could keep pace with the quickness of his thoughts, but he knew, unfortunately, too little of human nature It was his foremost wish to see the effects of his labours, and not leave all the advantages to posterity, and even if he could not live up to this ideal, modern Europe has to thank him for more good than is generally realised

In the same month as her Emperor, Maria Elizabeth, the wife of Prince Miklos Esterházy, died, to be followed a few weeks later by the "Magnificent" himself

His successor, Prince Paul Anton, disbanded the famous Esterházy orchestra, and Haydn, who was now pensioned, accepted an invitation to visit London The last person to say farewell to "Papa Haydn," when he left Vienna, was Mozart, then only thirty-four years old Neither divined that this parting was for ever, for Mozart did not live to see the return of his old friend a year later

The new Emperor, Joseph's brother, Leopold II of Tuscany, a realist, a liberal thinker, and a kindly man, who saw that evolution could not be checked, commanded that the decrees issued by his brother and revoked on his death bed should remain in force He himself, unlike Joseph, was exceptionally happy in his family life By his wife, Marie Louise of Spain, he had sixteen children, as had his own parents

He made peace in all directions, but he could not carry out his plan for liberating Marie Antoinette and Louis XVI, for in 1792 he died suddenly, and his son Francis followed him on the throne

About this time my great grandfather, Wolf Weiss, known as Mattersdorf, made his appearance in Old Ofen He had then attained the age of fourteen, and in accordance with the custom of those days it was time for him to stand on his own feet

These were weeks of great excitement for the Old Ofen community The authorities had given orders that the entry of a newly appointed Palatin¹ into the town was to be celebrated, and that "all well-dressed" inhabitants should line the Vienna post road Similar instructions were given when the Emperor Francis I passed through Old Ofen on his way to Buda, where he was to be crowned King of Hungary

Wolf was not particularly thrilled by the festivities, as the regal splendour displayed by the house of Esterházy in his old home had made him accustomed to pageantry But the Metropolis itself, this triplet of towns, traversed by the magnificent Danube, over

¹ The Prince Palatin a Governor or Vice-Roy of Hungary, an office not continued after 1853

which a bridge of boats carried the constant heavy traffic, made a very great impression on him.

The finest public buildings were in the fortress of Ofen, though some were in Pest, while Old Ofen, with its rows of small houses and cottages, still looked like a widespread village.

The royal palace on a hill-top, that vast and stately pile of buildings, the numerous churches, the university, the citadel crowning Mount Gellért, the many barracks, in which the soldiers lived more comfortably than one might have expected on their twopence-farthing pay, and the thousands of private houses—all this, with a chain of Alps in the background, was overwhelming to a boy brought up in a small provincial town.

But he could admire most of it only from the outside, especially the two theatres: that in Buda, which was originally a church, and was adapted by Joseph II to its new purpose, and a smaller one in Pest. Here the pieces were nearly always played in German, rarely in the Hungarian language; but as the public still went rather to the "Hetze," to see the wild beasts, and watch bulls fight their own kind, or the longhorned Hungarian oxen, this linguistic problem was a minor matter. Of greater importance was the entrance fee, which he could not afford in any case.

Otherwise, as an English traveller complained, there was little amusement to be found, apart from the eighteen coffee-houses. Especially in the summer, when most of the *grand monde* were out of town and lived on their country estates. The same wayfarer would have opened his eyes a few years later, when this little Paris came into full bloom.

For the time being the city's greatest attraction was the Pest Fair. Here was much to be seen without an entrance fee; one could even, if clever enough, make a few *Kreutzer*...

Many of the shopkeepers came from Vienna, and brought their merchandise with them, but the chief articles of commerce were the products of Hungary; above all, horses. These were driven to market, as were the herds of horned cattle, from the great *Pusztas*,¹ or commons; they were quite wild, and had never known a halter. When they arrived they were driven into pens, and it was no easy matter for the buyer to catch a horse and take it away. The *Csikos*,² a savage class of horsemen, used a long leather whip, fastened to a short wooden handle, wielding it like a lasso. As soon as the horse was caught there was a scene of the greatest confusion, for three or four stout fellows would fall upon it and seize it by the ears, mane, and head, at the risk of their own limbs. Sometimes they succeeded in slipping on the halter, but in many cases the horse would struggle out of their grip, and the whole procedure

¹ The Hungarian Steppe.

² Cowboy (literally: Pony

be repeated. Leading the horse away was often no less troublesome. For this purpose the buyer had usually a strong, steady horse at hand, and the two were fastened together with a short rope, but this method was not always successful, for the wild horse might drag his steady partner for miles before he was even slightly subdued by fatigue.

The smaller horses, such as were used by the peasants, were sold for four or five pounds, while the larger ones, bought by the army, cost as much as seven or eight.

The whole picture of this fair blazed with colour. Huge stacks of maize and cabbages, mountainous piles of green water-melons, sometimes cut open to display their ripe, red inner flesh, gigantic pumpkins, the red, green and yellow heaps of capsicum pods, and the sacks of the scarlet *paprika* powder which was made from them, the gypsies, in picturesque costumes, selling black earthenware plates or jugs, and articles of burnished brass, and the peasant girls dressed in multi-coloured shawls, all shone vividly in the glaring sunshine.

Most of the country people wore, in spite of the summer heat, a *Guba* or *Suba*. This latter garment is made in the form of a closely-fitting cloak, without a collar, and is composed of the skins of the long-woolled Hungarian sheep, which have been subjected to some sort of curing process, which does not, however, prevent them from retaining an odour the reverse of pleasant. The wool is left in its natural state; the skin side is often very prettily and even artistically ornamented; the seams are sewn with multi-coloured leather strips, bouquets of flowers are worked in silk on the sides and edges, and a black lambskin from Transylvania adorns the upper part in form of a cape. To the Puszta shepherd the *Suba* is his house, his bed, his all. Rarely, whether on the hottest day of summer, or the coldest of winter, does he forsake his woolly friend. He needs no change of dress; the adjustment of his *Suba* renders him insensible to either extreme. Should the sun oppress him as he is lazily watching his dogs hunting the field-mice, he turns the wool outside, for he knows, either by reason or experience, how effectively it will protect him from the heat. When the early snows on the Carpathians chill the storms before the pastures are eaten bare, and before he can return to his village, he turns the *Suba* a second time, but now with the wool inside, and again he trusts the non-conducting power of its shaggy coat.

The *Guba*, woven of coarse wool, presenting a somewhat similar appearance, but with the addition of sleeves, is a cheap and poor imitation of the *Suba*, and is never such an object of pride as the "real thing," which is usually handed from father to son, surviving several generations.

Most of the townspeople were dressed in dark suits, cut in hussar fashion, ornamented with lace, which was popular as a form of protest against Austria's Germanising policy.

Groups of people stood before the goods displayed in the open air, or around the stalls, the men quietly smoking their black clay pipes—though the wealthier favoured meerschaum, yellowed with age—while the women giggled and chattered.

The recruiting squads, as often in evidence as in the olden days at the English village fairs, gave a display of dances, to the accompaniment of fiddles; the dancers marking the rhythm by slapping their boots and breeches with their hands, striking their spurs against each other, and clicking wine-bottles and glasses. Music, alcohol, and noise were, the world over, the most potent assistants in the raising of soldiers.

Others watched the Wallachian bear-leader and his dancing bear, or an Italian organ-grinder, whose monkey was usually dressed in a hussar uniform, and a great favourite with the children.

Most of the stallholders were foreigners, for the Hungarian regarded such business as beneath his dignity, and left even the selling of his own farm-products to Armenian or Jewish agents, while he himself was concerned only to spend the money he received as soon as possible. This prejudice resulted in a most unhealthy situation, for the lack of capital forced the peasants into the hands of usurers, and instead of blaming their own laziness or levity, all their troubles were imputed to the men who lent them the *gulden*.

Under these circumstances it was not difficult to find employment as a middleman, especially if one spoke several languages, as most of the Burgenland people did. Here, close to the Austrian frontier, German and Hungarian were spoken simultaneously, and as many Croats lived in this district, a Slavonic speaker could usually make himself understood. Latin, which was used by the learned classes, instead of the hated official tongue forced on them by the Habsburgs, was in those days a living language. This explains why French and Italian, with their Latin roots, were learned so easily in Hungary, and why English offered fewer difficulties to the Magyars than to other nations.

But for the time being, the French language was taboo, for the news arriving from France was most disturbing. Marie Antoinette, who was the aunt of Emperor Francis, and her husband, Louis XVI, had been guillotined, and now, to the greatest horror of the ruling classes of Europe, the French Revolution was in full swing.

As the Viennese newspapers reported, when the atrocities in Paris became known, many of the French residing in Austria, most of whom, probably, had no sympathy with the revolutionaries,

were roughly handled. They hardly dared to show themselves, and no innkeeper would receive a Frenchman under his roof. To quote one of the articles mentioned: "What deadly blow to liberty is the French revolution! Where there can be no alternative between the French licentiousness and the most despotic government of Europe, what upright and sensible man will hesitate to prefer the latter, and quietly wear his chains? What an example for tyrants to hold up on their own behalf to a justly revolting people! Mayest thou, Gallia, alone suffer, and, unworthy of moderate government, ever live in the turbulencies of democratic anarchy, or feel the imperiousness of despotic sway; whilst the rest of Europe peaceably continues under its various governments and quietly awaits the amelioration of its lot!"

In spite of the turbulent times, Haydn ventured on a second visit to England, and, as he recorded in a letter, the journey from Vienna to London took only seventeen days. But as his master Prince Paul Anton died in the beginning of 1794, and the successor, Miklos II, engaged a new band, Haydn soon returned to Esterházy.

The Prince revived this famous orchestra mainly to please his wife, Maria Josepha, as his interests were very different from those of his father. His name was coupled with the names of the dancers, Fanny and Theresa Elssler, and it was said on good authority that he had pensioned two hundred demi-mondaines and more than a hundred illegitimate children. As a witty lady once observed: "L'Estéerházy font tout en grand!"

For his harem, quite as famous and no less costly than the diamond-encrusted coat of his ancestors, a number of young ladies were educated in Paris and Brussels, so that after his death the Princess, a Princess Liechtenstein by birth, had to apply to Salomon Rothschild on several occasions for friendly advice and financial assistance.

CHAPTER IV

BLUE DANUBE—BLACK DAYS

THE infantile kicks and struggles of Napoleon Bonaparte, the pale-faced offspring of the Corsican attorney, had long been succeeded by more powerful gestures, and now he was dealing the mightiest kicks and blows in all directions. France was reconstructed : the greater part of Europe lay at the feet of the man who, starting his career as a simple lieutenant, had contrived to crown himself Emperor in Paris.

On October 20, 1805, only ten weeks after declaration of war by Austria, the Habsburg armies capitulated to Napoleon at Ulm on the Danube. But he could not fully rejoice in the victory, for the news reached him that Nelson, the one-eyed, one-armed British admiral, had destroyed the united Franco-Spanish fleets near Cape Trafalgar, and there, though he himself was mortally wounded, called a halt for the time being to France's maritime aspirations.

Entering Vienna, Bonaparte, who owed his rise to a revolution which had shed the blood of Maria Theresa's favourite daughter, took up his residence in Schönbrunn, the palace which this Empress had finally completed, and which she had cherished all her life. The huge, luxurious, yellow blocks of buildings, planned by Fischer von Erlach in the finest Baroque style, contained one thousand four hundred apartments, with one hundred and forty kitchens. Its parks and gardens, much larger than those of Versailles, made a great impression on Napoleon. He occupied, however, only a small bedroom, situated next to the famous *Porzellan-Zimmer*, which had been decorated, after the designs of Joseph II's first wife, in the Chinese fashion.

But he was soon off again, to conduct the battle of Brünn in person. On the day when this action took place the only opera which Beethoven ever wrote, *Leonore*—later known as *Fidelio*—was first produced in Vienna, the composer conducting from the piano. The public, however, on account of the bad war news, was restless and in no mood to listen ; so that the few people present gave the performance a rather cold reception.

On the first anniversary of his coronation Napoleon, using quite novel methods of strategy, finally defeated the Austrians at Austerlitz, where they were left more or less in the lurch by their Russian allies.

From Austerlitz Napoleon offered Prince Esterházy the crown

of Hungary, imagining that an independent Magyar State would still further weaken the Habsburg régime. But Miklos, remaining faithful to the Emperor Francis, refused, continuing to give, as his forefathers had so often done, all possible assistance to his imperial master.

A few days later, on Christmas Day, 1805, the French troops evacuated Vienna in accordance with the treaty of Pressburg, and Napoleon returned to Paris.

The lost war and the consequent financial ruin of the country did not prevent the Viennese from rejoicing now that the invaders had left. "We are poor but gay," was a saying that was then becoming fashionable; and down to our own days it remained the Austrian motto.

The ensuing carnival was like a dance on the summit of a volcano; often a Bacchanalian dance; and as the French troops had introduced the waltz, Vienna, with the rest of Europe, fell under its spell.

The storming of the Bastille had symbolised not only the downfall of absolutism, but also the end of an aristocratic age in France; and at the same time the minuet, that typical dance of the Rococo, received its death-blow.

The dignified, passionless, symmetrical steps, well suited to placid courtiers, were not congenial to the newly-freed French people. They, full of vigour and temperament, wanted a more energetic outlet for their exalted feelings, and discarded the hoop-skirts, the towering coiffures, and the dignified, pastel-shaded costumes, for cruder fashions and more vivid colours. The minuet made way for the Carmagnole.

This licentious, rowdy round-dance, a wild circular hopping, an irregular stamping and whirling, with much screaming and shouting, was fully expressive of the excited mood of the times.

But when the "Empire" created a new aristocracy and refined the taste of the uncouth mob, the violent manners and fashions were tamed. The turbulent leaping and jigging lost its vehemence, and the revolutionary Carmagnole, discarding its rustic boorishness, surrendered to the graceful waltz. The newly-introduced parquet-flooring gave it still greater smoothness, making it a gliding, skating dance, and the soft, rather sweetish melodies, the languishing, undulating movements, harmonised admirably with the sentimental character of the Viennese, so that the waltz became a ruling passion in the Imperial city.

This centre of classical music soon accepted the new rhythm, and the waltz, as formerly the sarabande and minuet, became a most important part of many musical compositions.

Old and young, high and low, all were bewitched by the new

melodies. But the pleasing passion soon became a mania, which presently assumed dangerous forms and dimensions, making the people forget the seriousness of the situation.

The Court, instead of restricting the new fashion, accepted it, and rather encouraged its subjects, as the endless balls distracted their minds from the revolutionary ideas that were permeating the atmosphere of Europe.

The Habsburgs always understood how to make themselves popular by displaying a certain degree of affability, even though it were only on the surface.

Viennese slang was used in the highest circles; archdukes and princesses visited the public dances and restaurants, and mixed freely with the people, while the palace parks and gardens were open to all.

By making these small concessions to the "mob" the imperial family saved Austria from the terrors of a revolution without, in fact, relaxing their grasp of the reins. The dynasty was lavish with its bestowal of "*panem et circenses*" on the plebs, and by playing up to the Dionysiac and Falstaffian temperament of the Austrians it blinded them to the realities of their servitude.

In this respect, and in their Catholic love of pomp, enhanced by their retention of the ancient Spanish ceremonial, the House of Habsburg-Lorraine offered a striking contrast with the reserved, puritanical ways of the Protestant kings of Prussia, whom the Vienna court regarded as *parvenus*.

But not only the rulers were dissimilar. Their idiosyncrasies penetrated deeply into the souls of their subjects, and left an indelible imprint on the character of the two nations. Consequently, in spite of a mutual language, the German and Austrian characters are as heterogeneous and divergent as though the peoples were living on different planets. Not even the end of the Habsburg and Hohenzollern rule, and cessation of direct court influence, has modified this fact; the characters of the two peoples were too firmly moulded.

The Austrian, with his love of good cheer, good living, and entertainment did not consider hard work an essential feature of life, as did his Prussian neighbour. The pageantry of Court and Church, and the artistic inclinations of the ruling classes, shaped the taste of Vienna, and turned it in certain directions. This softened the character of the people, making it more flexible and receptive to foreign influence, unlike the rigid Prussian character, imbued with the Spartan ideas of Frederick the Great, or Bismarck's belief in the policy of "blood and iron."

While the Austrian has something of the gaiety of the Southerner and, even when he adopts the habits and fashions of other nations, is inclined to mellow their asperities, the German produces a

imitation, his humour is artificial, his emotions forced and unnatural. While the West German, strongly influenced by France, or the South German, affected by his nearness to Austria, tended to show a more supple and versatile character, Prussian rule soon restored the Teutonic clumsiness and pseudo sentimentality. Even the great artistic German geniuses—for example, Goethe, who was more of an ancient Greek in his appearance and his outlook than a Prussian—were always full of nostalgia for the South and all that it stood for.

The impetus given to social activities, to conduct and fashion by the Crown and the aristocracy, speedily spread over the whole monarchy, like the expanding ripples generated by a stone playfully thrown into the water.

Courtly ideas and fashions found their way from Vienna to Budapest, to Prague, Zagreb, Trieste, and all the other centres of the Dual Empire. Everywhere they suffered certain local modifications, and as a tennis ball acquires renewed velocity with each stroke, they returned from the Crown provinces in a changed form, and often conquered the world, passing the frontiers into neighbouring states. This process made for a measure of equality and uniformity, and was fought tooth and nail by the nationalities of Austria-Hungary, who hated everything that came from "The Burg" or "Schonbrunn." But as the majority of their magnates and nobles spent the winter months in Vienna, and the inclination to copy the upper classes is just as strong in Central Europe as in other parts of the world, many habits and institutions were naturalised in spite of this nationalistic antagonism.

The army, recruited from every part of the Empire, was stationed in garrisons all over the Crownlands. Since the officers and men were constantly in contact with the population, they too played their part in the process of assimilation, and smuggled ideas into the public mind, a fact which was hardly realised.

As a result of these influences a certain general character was developing, and this persisted in spite of all chauvinistic clamour. The Poles of Galicia, the Magyars in Hungary, the Czechs, the Croats and all the other component peoples of this multiple land, had their distinct individual characters, their own ways of life, and spoke their own languages and dialects, nevertheless, they possessed certain unmistakable traits in common. This was most plainly perceptible in the city populations, especially in the middle classes, whose mentality, all over this vast monarchy, was becoming more and more equalised. But this tendency toward assimilation, toward a certain uniformity in all parts of the world, becomes stronger every day, with the development of the means of communication and the speeding up of traffic.

The nationalities identified everything Austrian with their rulers, and they hated them, at the same time detesting one another. The Viennese regarded the Hungarians—and for that matter, the Slovaks, Italians, Serbs, and all the rest—as barbarians and potential rebels, and lazy mischief-makers. At the same time, nothing could exceed the horror with which a true Magyar regarded both the Habsburgs and their loyal subjects; for him they were merely slave-drivers and oppressors. As disaffection rarely inspires love, the German-Austrians harboured similar feelings in respect of the other inhabitants of the monarchy.

The intensity of this hostility always depended on special circumstances, and it was usually directed more especially against one or another of the many peoples of the Empire. As there was always trouble brewing in some corner of the Empire, that nation was hated most from which the ill wind was just blowing.

This hatred went so far that the Viennese “Frau Canzleirat”¹ and her lesser sisters would threaten their fretful children, by way of lulling them to sleep, with a Hungarian bugbear, a Dalmatian sea-serpent, or a Czech boggy-man; while the Prague, Krakow or Zagreb mother dressed her hobgoblins and the like in “Swabian” or other national costumes.

All this enmity, however, did not prevent the peoples from dancing one another’s dances, copying their cooking recipes, and imitating other minutiae of social life.

Is Gulyás a Hungarian “shepherd’s pie”? Well, what if it is? It tastes good, and people eat it all along the course of the Danube. Is the Polka, in spite of its name, a Czech dance? Well, what then? It started on its world tour from Prague, and so did the Bohemian “Schottische.” But after all—so long as one could eat and drink and swing one’s partner to the rhythm of a taking tune, what did it matter where the melody came from?

To dance! Dancing became a veritable epidemic, like that of the religious Flagellants, who ran amok across Europe in the Middle Ages. But a new age had begun, the era of mechanisation, of factories—the Industrial Revolution—and with it the growth of a class of *nouveaux riches*. Not only the factories, but everything else had to be on the lines of mass production, and so the first dance-palaces were built in Vienna by speculators.

As the ball-rooms of the Court were too exclusive, and had not floor space to accommodate the whole dance-mad nation, it was easy for enterprising men to make money by providing the necessary buildings.

These Viennese dance-halls, the Sperl, the Mehlgrube, Monds-

¹ A councillor’s wife. In Germany the wife shares her husband’s title (for example, Frau Doctor, even if she herself has no degree).

chein-Halle, Apollo-Palast—were built on a scale unprecedented in Europe, modelled on the luxurious ball-rooms of the wealthy nobles, and decorated in the most ostentatious fashion.

The most outstanding of these halls was the Apollo, designed by Moreau, and one of the greatest wonders of the century. It harboured under its huge roof winter gardens with living trees and shrubs, several lakes with swans floating on their surface, illuminated grottos, cascades, waterfalls, fountains, and dining-rooms of dimensions never seen before. Thousands of mirrors competed with parquet floors to reflect the light of hundreds of candelabra and girandoles, while six thousand dancers could disport themselves to the strains of the orchestra. The opulence of the countless apartments, decorated and furnished in every historical style, was worthy of a Croesus. The tables laid in the most lavish manner with the finest china, cut glass, and silver, with floral decorations worthy of a fairy-tale, were the admiration of the aristocratic visitors from all parts of Europe.

The creator of this architectural dream, Sigmund Wolffson, who was born in London, had made an immense fortune as the only manufacturer of artificial limbs and other surgical appliances during the bloody Napoleonic wars. A surgeon and mechanic, with a most versatile mind, he had an excellent understanding of human psychology, and being at the same time a business man of the first rank, he soon conquered Vienna. It was his idea to exploit the Turkish bath for hygienic purposes on commercial lines; and in advertising his dance-hall, his cosmetic preparations, and his often worthless beauty appliances, he employed quite novel methods of publicity. Wolffson's patients, clients, customers, dancers and bathers were recruited from all ranks of society, and when he asked an entrance-fee of ten gulden for a gala night at the Apollo, the people lined up in long queues, knowing that on such an occasion they were certain to meet members of the Imperial family, and perhaps even the Emperor Francis himself, or some of his royal guests.

One wonders which of Wolffson's many qualities and abilities was most worthy of admiration. His was a personality typical of an unsafe age, when a special mentality prevails, and speculative geniuses or ruthless quacks can easily come to the fore, and by taking advantage of the general lability, acquire a dominating position. In troubled waters not only pilots, but also pirates and sharks find a livelihood.

The inflation of Austrian currency, the depreciation of paper money, made the people careless and prodigal. Living was cheap in any case; food and drink were so abundant that real prosperity mattered little to the Viennese. Local and Hungarian wines cost

next to nothing ; a meal of fried chicken and good white bread was to be had for a song. . . . So they sang and danced, and left worrying to others, until trouble was at the gates again.

Troubles came thick and fast in the year 1809, when Napoleon, though his forces were numerically much weaker than those of the Austrians, defeated them in a series of brilliantly conceived actions. Barely five weeks after the beginning of the war his artillery bombarded the centre of Vienna, and he quartered himself in Schönbrunn, again occupying the small bedroom, which was soon to play such a tragic part in his family history.

The cannon-balls fell quite close to Haydn's house ; they struck buildings in the neighbourhood of Beethoven's flat, and the convent in which Schubert, then twelve years of age, was living as a member of the Imperial Boys' Choir. But Napoleon, when he heard that the Archduchess Marie Louise lay ill in the Hofburg, gave orders to his batteries to change the direction of fire, and by so doing he may unwittingly have saved not only the lives of three musical geniuses, but also that of his future wife.

Haydn, who was now seventy-seven years of age, and who took the misfortune of his country greatly to heart, fell seriously ill. In spite of the weakness which overcame him he had himself carried to the piano, where he played with great ardour his "Emperor hymn," the "Gotterhalte." This he had composed after his last visit to London, the British "God save the King" having greatly impressed him on this occasion. But he could not divine that his lovely tune would symbolise, for the nationalities of Austria, the hated rule of the Habsburgs, together with the black and yellow and the two-headed eagle, and that much blood would be shed in order to enforce its playing.

The city of Vienna was taken ; but a few days later Bonaparte suffered his first defeat on land, for he was beaten at Aspern by the Archduke Karl. The bridge over the Danube having been swept away under the French troops, they had to retreat to the Isle of Lobau. The importance of this battle lay less in its strategic consequences than in the fact that the myth of Napoleon's invincibility was here, for the first time, exploded. He himself realised this only too well, and blamed his hazardous dispositions for the tragedy, while the Catholics put it down to his quarrel with the Pope.

Austria could not take advantage of this victory, being again left without the help promised by her allies, Britain, Turkey, Prussia and the Tzar, so that Bonaparte was soon able to restore the situation.

Haydn's condition had in the meantime taken a grave turn. His last visitor was an officer of the French garrison, who sang for him

Uriel's aria from "The Creation"; and two days later, on the last day of May 1809, the great composer did not awake from his sleep. His funeral, owing to the troubled times, was attended only by few, but a French regiment mounted guard over his bier, and many of Napoleon's generals were present at the memorial service. A last musical farewell to his old friend "Papa Haydn" was uttered by the spirit of Mozart, when his Requiem was played on this solemn occasion.

Haydn's earthly remains were subsequently taken to Eisenstadt, which had seen the beginning of his great career. Here, in the crypt of the *Bergkirche*, the Princes Esterházy gave him a last resting-place, who, through his genius, had brought more fame, glory, and brilliance to this house than all their regal wealth and sparkling jewels.

The Burgenland also was overrun by the French, and the columns of the Viceroy Beauharnais, Bonaparte's brother-in-law, penetrated as far as Győr, where they compelled the armies of the Archduke Johann to lay down their arms. A seventeen-year old Hungarian cavalry subaltern, Count István Szécheni, distinguished himself in this battle, by conveying a message across the Danube at the risk of his own life. By this feat he was responsible for bringing about the junction of the two Austrian armies, but the help came too late, and could not restore the situation.

Once again the French offered Esterházy the Crown of St. Stephen, at the same time encouraging the nobles of Hungary to hold an assembly on the field of Rákös in the traditional manner. On this plain, three or four miles from Pest, the nation used formerly to meet, in order to elect their sovereign and hold their Diets. On certain of these occasions as many as eighty thousand had pitched their tents. But since the fatal battle of Mohács, when the Sultan Suleiman annihilated the Magyar army, no such meeting had been held, and Napoleon was unable to revive the habit.

Prince Nicholas again declined the offer with thanks, in spite of the rumours which the French had spread through the newspaper press that he had already been crowned in Buda.

This rebuff did nothing to raise Napoleon's spirits, already depressed by various unpleasant incidents. There was the Tyrolese peasant insurrection under Andreas Hofer, and the memory of Aspern; and an attempt had been made on his life during a military parade at Schönbrunn. Friedrich Staps, the nineteen-year-old son of a Naumburg parson, tried to kill him with a long knife, but was prevented at the last moment from carrying out his plan.

The Emperor, who offered to exercise mercy if the boy expressed regret, had him executed when he refused to sue for pardon, and hurriedly left for Paris.

Shortly before Napoleon's departure Metternich, the Austrian Chancellor, one of the cleverest diplomats and greatest intriguers of his day, had several intimate conversations with the Emperor. It is most probable that these interviews gave the first impetus to the idea of divorcing Josephine and marrying Marie Louise, the daughter of the Emperor Francis.

The official engagement having been announced on March 11, 1810, barely one month later the marriage took place in Vienna, in the church of St. Augustine, where Napoleon was represented by proxy. The ecclesiastical ceremony was performed with the greatest pomp in Paris, in the chapel of the Louvre, the details of the wedding being modelled on that of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette—a striking proof of the extraordinary tactlessness of the Imperial bridegroom, having regard to the tragic fate of Maria Theresa's unhappy daughter. But malicious tongues were already denouncing him for having brutally anticipated the religious ceremony, by consummating his union with Marie Louise before he had the formal right to do so.

The new Empress, according to contemporary descriptions, was really quite charming, although she was slightly pock-marked, and had the heavy lips typical of the Habsburgs. But the lively vitality of this girl of eighteen, the freshness of her fair complexion, and her large blue eyes, counterbalanced these trivial defects, and though in Parisian eyes her dress was clumsy and unbecoming, this failing was forgiven after the announcement that she was an expectant mother.

In the autumn of the following year an astronomical phenomenon excited the interest of the scientists, but it also aroused the misgivings of the superstitious, who saw in it a very bad omen. Night after night Halley's comet shone brightly in a clear sky.

Early one morning, on September 22, one of Prince Esterházy's assistant stewards, Adam Liszt, watched this celestial wanderer from a window in Raiding, near the Neusiedler Lake, while his wife, in the same room, was being delivered of a healthy male child.

This boy, Franz Liszt, received a scholarship of six hundred gulden per year from his father's employer, Miklos II, after displaying his abilities, during a concert in Ödenburg, as a child prodigy. He became the world-famous pianist and composer. But the bond between the house of Esterházy and the art of music was not broken when Liszt left their domain, for twenty years later, on another of the princely estates in the Seven Communes near Castle Kittsee—Joseph Joachim, the great violin virtuoso was born.

Franz Schubert's passion for Caroline Esterházy, to whom he gave pianoforte lessons in Castle Zsellés for a consideration of two gulden the hour, and to whom he dedicated some

has often been described. She, however, was a member of another branch of the family, that of the Counts Esterházy, who treated Schubert less generously than the lord of Forchtenstein dealt with Haydn.

But even though the master of song-writing is only indirectly connected with this great musical circle, its influence on him cannot be denied.

The reasons why, within a radius of a few miles, and in the brief period of a few decades, so many musical geniuses were born, men of the stature of Haydn, Liszt, Weigl and Joachim, are inexplicable. Still more miraculous seems the fact that not so very far from this district scores of others came into the world who created a circle of musicians unparalleled in history. Albrechtsberger the great theoretician, and Beethoven's teacher, Hummel, the latter's favourite pupil and Mozart's intimate friend, Czerny, Bruckner, the Strausses, Hans Richter, Goldmark, Dohnányi, all first saw the light in this part of the Dual Empire. They in turn were surrounded by a wider circle, including such geniuses as Gluck, Beethoven, Brahms and Mahler, to mention only a few.

Climatic and other circumstances, including the abundance of Slavonic, Hungarian and German folk-songs and gypsy tunes, may have helped to inspire these artists, but posterity must be grateful to the magnates, and to those members of Viennese society, who, at a time when others were still keeping great composers like so many musical slaves, offered them freedom, encouragement, and assistance.

Napoleon's continental blockade, directed against England, soon became a source of income for speculators and enterprising men of affairs in all parts of Europe, bringing prosperity to those who were willing and able to take the great risks involved in their illicit business.

As the French, Dutch, Hanseatic and Pomeranian ports were closed, and the strict control made all the western coasts of Europe unsafe for smugglers, British ships, sailing under neutral flags, now brought their contraband cargoes to the Baltic and Black Sea harbours.

These cargoes found their way, via Asia Minor, or up the Vistula, into the Danubian basin, and were then carried by river boats

the obstacles raised against the export of British goods gave a great impetus to the development of new industries, and also to the revival of old trades here. So it came about that the ancient crafts of cloth- and linen-weaving, dyeing, and cotton-printing,

once widely practised in Bohemia and Moravia, were now rejuvenated. As all the Jewish traders had been driven out of these parts of Austria by the decrees of Maria Theresa, several experts in these crafts had settled in Old Ofen, and did not return to their old home when Joseph II's Patent of Toleration restored their freedom.

The opportunity offered by Napoleon's jealousy of British industrial domination was eagerly seized, and before long several factories were pouring their goods into the market of Pest, and were presently despatching them to other centres of commerce. The products of many of these Old Ofen firms became well known, and as time went on they found their way into the world markets.

Wolf Weiss, known as Mattersdorf, who displayed little inclination towards the paternal trade of butcher, tried to keep his head above water by exploiting some of the few sources of income to which his race had for centuries been restricted. Operating as a petty commercial agent or middleman in the fairs and markets of Pest and Ofen, occasionally also as a pedlar, and being accustomed to an open-air life, he abhorred the noise of the factory, and so did not join in the rush to the looms and the dye-vats.

To become a musician or a singer had been his greatest ambition ever since the days of his youth, when, hanging upon the lips of the story-tellers, as they related their incredible tales of the princely household, and of Haydn's operatic performances and concerts, he had dreamt of nothing else.

As a child, he had once or twice accompanied his father the butcher to Eisenstadt, and on these occasions he had listened spell-bound to the sounds of rehearsals coming from the "Musik-Haus" which Miklos Esterházy had built outside the palace gates, so that the trial performances should not disturb the Prince and his guests.

To young Wolf it had seemed that paradise must lie behind these walls, and that the strains that issued thence were the music of the spheres. He was even fortunate enough on one occasion to see the orchestra setting out for the castle, the musicians dressed in their picturesque court uniforms and carrying their instruments. Someone who had observed how impressed the boy was had pointed out to him the cottage next door as the composer Weigl's birth-place, and had led him to the stairs near by, explaining that they led up to Papa Haydn's modest apartments.

My great-grandfather cherished these memories to his dying day, and never lost an opportunity of listening to music.

The Old Ofen wedding parties seemed to him less gay than in his old home, but one could earn a decent meal, and sometimes even pick up a gulden, by singing as a *Klesmer*—the popular name given to vocalists or musicians—and later, when his voice broke and

changed into a deep bass, he joined the Synagogue choir, which then became his main source of income

Early in 1811, being then thirty three years old, he married a girl only half his age, and she, Leonora Blau, became my great grandmother

Soon after their wedding Hungary was once again visited by the terrible calamity of a Danubian inundation. These floods recurred almost every spring, with more or less devastating effects, when the frozen river began to thaw, and the jagged sheets of ice, piling up into huge walls, dammed the waters of the Danube. The ill constructed quays offered little protection against the uncontrolled violence of the waves, and when the swollen stream burst through the inadequate dykes, it destroyed great numbers of houses, making many families homeless

At the same time a financial tempest swept over Austria Hungary. The Napoleonic wars had brought these countries to the verge of material ruin, and the Minister of Finance tried to save the situation by devaluing the paper gulden to one fifth of its former level. An epidemic of bankruptcies, suspensions of payment, and insolvency followed this ill conceived decree, which inflicted terrible hardships upon the masses

But the always careless, frivolous people of Vienna, in their indestructible optimism, quickly forgot their troubles, and rejoiced in the news arriving from Paris that the Emperor Francis had a grandson, the child of Marie Louise, wife of Napoleon

This infant crown prince, baptised in Nôtre Dame under the name of Napoleon Francis Joseph Charles, received, like the former heirs of the Holy Roman Empire, the title of King of Rome, a distinction which he did not long enjoy

Bonaparte's spectacular career had now passed its zenith, and had entered upon a descent which was soon to become even more rapid than the preceding rise

His armies, rarely defeated by mortal enemies, were in Russia reduced by sickness, famine and frost. This tragic campaign was soon to be followed by a still greater ordeal in Saxony

During this latter war young Count Stephan Széchenyi, now a lieutenant, distinguished himself again, by riding through the enemy lines, conveying to Blucher and Bernadotte the orders for the battle of Leipzig, where Bonaparte received a blow from which he never recovered. The shock of his wife's flight, in the spring of 1814, to Vienna, where she sought protection for her son and herself, destroyed Napoleon's last powers of mental resistance. According to some sources she was accompanied from the Austrian frontier to Schonbrunn by Adam, Count Neippberg, an old friend, who became her second husband a few years later. This field marshal

lieutenant, whose dashing appearance was enhanced by a black shade over his right eye, was then thirty-nine years of age. A great lady-killer, he made a strong impression on the unhappy Empress.

The young Napoleon II now lost his title of King of Rome, to receive, for the time being, the more modest title of Prince of Parma, and still later this was exchanged for that of Duke of Reichstadt. He had the same little bedroom assigned to him in the residence of Schönbrunn which his then victorious father had occupied on two occasions.

CHAPTER V

BAL-CAN-CAN

JUST as it is customary in society to go on to a "supper and dance" after visiting the theatre, so the nobles and princes of Europe, having watched the sufferings of their peoples, found in the Congress of Vienna a novel relaxation and entertainment.

Now that Napoleon was apparently safe in Elba the Imperial city became, for a while, the focus of European society, and her inhabitants and their guests were free to enjoy one of the greatest spectacles ever mounted on the stage of history.

The Congress drew to the shores of the Danube all those who wanted to be present at the general settling of accounts, the reshuffling of the political cards, and it also attracted numbers of men and women eager to watch the game and feast their eyes on the pageantry. This influx of visitors, containing a good sprinkling of adventurers and others of the kind who like to fish in troubled waters, was consequently fairly mixed in character.

Over a hundred thousand visitors came to Vienna during the nine months of the diplomatic fair, and no one who wished to be accounted a member of *le beau monde* could afford to miss it.

The hospitality offered by the House of Habsburg and the Austro-Hungarian magnates was on a scale which the world had not seen since the days of ancient Rome, and this mass-entertainment, combined with the gigantic side-shows, which constituted a gossip mart, a continuous fashion- and vanity-parade, cost the taxpayers, first and last, at least as much as one of the lost wars against Napoleon; approximately, some thirty millions of gold francs.

But behind the smoke-screen of Imperial hospitality and popular whoopee, not observable to untrained eyes, were the activities of the wire-pulling and intriguing politicians and diplomatists and their underlings, which kept the Vienna police, with their sinister methods, their army of confidants and informers, extremely busy. Lost or stolen State documents, the constant fear that the Duke of Reichstadt might be kidnapped by his father's followers, or clandestine and apparently sinister visits, which concealed no greater mystery than some royalty's harmless love affair, meant breathless work for these bloodhounds of the Imperial House, and made them more than once the laughing-stock of the gay Viennese.

Allies in arms, whose unity lasted only as long as the common

danger existed, now, when it came to the distribution of the spoils, forgot their pledges and their former bargains, in their eagerness to grab as much as possible. The disparity of their interests, of their secret intentions or open aims, created such an atmosphere of distrust and enmity that wars between former allies were often almost inevitable.

The Tzar and the British envoy were equally anxious to postpone the decisions of the Congress, to prolong its proceedings, and in consequence the programme of entertainment planned by the Imperial Court had to be several times extended, with the result that in the end not only the Congress members, the guests and visitors, but even the Viennese population itself became weary of amusement, satiated with pageantry. It was therefore small wonder that this assembly was known to history by the name of "the dancing Congress" and the saying "*le Congress danse, mais il ne marche pas*" precisely expressed its character.

Tournaments, dancing on the ice, popular and aristocratic costume balls, the revival of hawking parties, hunts, displays of horsemanship, historical masquerades, shooting contests and dramatic performances followed on one another in endless succession. But a crowd always eager for the sensational quickly tires of the conventional sources of amusement, craving for something new and special. In the quest for novel ideas diversions were planned which verged upon the ridiculous, as when, for example, Salieri arranged a multiple pianoforte concert with a hundred instruments; or when a gala sausage-eating contest was held in close juxtaposition to an imposing ecclesiastical ceremony.

A young German forester, Drais, introduced a new invention, the "Draisine," and performed on this pedal-driven hobby-horse-car, the forerunner of our bicycle.

Operas and charades alternated with military parades, and one may well wonder that after twenty years of incessant warfare the spectators were not weary of the sight of soldiers, even if they were only drilling or parading.

As in those days the Imperial palace harboured two emperors, two empresses, four kings, one queen, and some dozens of crown princes, archdukes, and archduchesses, while the younger royal guests, and the more distant relatives of the reigning families were lodged in Schönbrunn, the problems of etiquette meant sleepless nights for the Habsburg officials. The whole of Vienna was swarming with distinguished personalities, all convinced of their own importance, all jealously insisting on the privileges of their rank. At some of the conferences no fewer than seven hundred diplomatists were present, while the numbers of the Ministers and their staffs reached astronomical figures. The order of the seating

accommodation, the determination of precedence, became a major problem, a very nightmare to the hosts, who on several occasions had to receive over ten thousand guests under their roofs, or at their garden parties, and could hardly avoid giving offence to scores of them

The expenses of the Imperial kitchen averaged £5,000 per diem, and since at the time the aristocracy were spending huge sums of money on entertaining the visitors in their own palaces, one might almost have expected the streets of Vienna to be paved with gold

In the dispensing of hospitality Paul Esterházy III was ably assisted by his wife, born a Princess of Thurn and Taxis. He became known by the modest title of "The Spender," a predicate as richly deserved as that of the Princess, known in Society as "la beauté étonnante." This delightful couple had no difficulty in running up debts to the tune of some two million pounds, in spite of their regal wealth. They were, however, only two spendthrifts among many, and, notwithstanding the colossal amounts expended, the population of Vienna did not profit materially, for prices went rocketing up, and what people received in one hand they had to give out with the other. But no one really minded, so long as they could partake in the merrymaking, see the sights, and attend the Congress.

While Vienna was dancing the waltz to the few waltz tunes available, composed by musicians of Hummel's type, who were not greatly interested in dance music, and found these melodies beneath their dignity, in one of Vienna's side streets, a boy of ten years, Johann Strauss, very much against his will, was serving his time as a bookbinder's apprentice.

There he delighted his colleagues by whistling melodies of his own invention, wielding the gluepot and brush to the rhythms of improvised waltz-tunes. He also entertained his fellow workers by playing the fiddle during the short periods of intermission, but *this was strictly against his master's orders, and one day, when his employer administered corporal punishment, the boy, who looked like a gipsy with his dark curls and his swarthy complexion, ran away, never to return to the workshop.* Thus Strauss, who did not merely look, but also played like a real *gypsy*,¹ became in time the great master of the waltz, and the founder of a family of composers, whose members—Johann, Joseph, and Eduard—conquered the world with their inexhaustible flow of dance music, and made Vienna not only the centre of this type of melody, but the cradle of modern musical comedy and operetta.

But even if waltz melodies were still scarce in the days of the Congress, the tide of entertainment never ebbed, and as the hands

¹ Gypsy



EMPEROR JOSEPH II OF HABSBURG



AND IN WINTER



THE ALBA IN SUMMER

went round the clock the breathless succession of amusements was never interrupted for a moment. While people were racking their brains to invent some new frolic, Napoleon, who in a sense was the originator of this political tomfoolery, suddenly provided an unexpected sensation by sailing from Elba, accompanied by a force of eleven hundred in seven small vessels. Two days later, on February 26, he landed in France. The tempest raised by his old soldiers, as they shouted themselves hoarse with their cries of "Vive l'Empereur!" soon reached the Congress, and blew out the festive candles and the coloured lights. The revival of Bonaparte's power, however, was only shortlived; the magic of his personality had vanished for ever, and a hundred days after his return from Elba, "la Grande Armée" was finally defeated at Waterloo.

In vain he implored Marie Louise to join him with their child, and after abdicating in favour of his son, Napoleon thought to find a refuge in England. But the British warship which he boarded, trusting that it would carry him to freedom, took him no further than to Plymouth Sound, whence H.M.S. *Northumberland* bore him as a prisoner to St. Helena.

The rulers of Austria, Russia and Prussia now formed a "Holy Alliance," and were soon joined by all the other European powers, excepting only Britain, and, strangely enough, the Papal State, both of which kept carefully aloof from the "holy" congregation. The unity of this happy family was based partly on fear lest the well-guarded Corsican should once more return from his remote South Atlantic prison, but the Alliance was at the same time a "league against nations" created by reactionaries who beheld the writing on the wall.

Paul Esterházy, "the Spender," had in the meantime taken up his duties as Austrian Ambassador in London. His wife, Theresa, made a great impression on English society, with her astonishing beauty—and was she not the niece of two reigning queens?

In his usual modest fashion the Prince stocked the Embassy cellars with well over one hundred thousand bottles of Hungarian wines, which naturally added to the amenities of his receptions. But he also earned the reputation of a skilful diplomatist, when, by sheer accident, he found in a London newspaper, "The Vigilant," the code of an ingenious cipher, inserted by the Bonapartists, who had hoped that this periodical, strongly hostile to Napoleon, could be smuggled past the censor to St. Helena, and so reach the Emperor. Esterházy at once raised the alarm, and not only the members of the Holy Alliance, but Britain also, took the necessary steps to prevent further trouble, and to protect the peace of which Europe was so greatly in need.

The gigantic bloodletting of the Napoleonic wars had enfeebled the man-power of Europe and emptied the coffers of the States. Austria was forced to devalue her paper money for the second time within five years, and a 100-gulden note, still valued at twenty silver florins after the first cut, was now, in 1816, worth only eight of these coins.

Bonaparte's final disappearance, as through a trap-door in the stage of European history, was followed by a silence which seemed almost unnatural after the turmoil of the preceding twenty years.

As in the days of Louis XIV and his successors, when the French aristocracy sought escape from the extravagances of court life by creating an artificial rustic Arcadia, the home of spurious shepherds and shepherdesses, and Rousseau's philosophy preached the "return to Nature," so now Viennese society, tired of sensation, weary of bustle, sated with pompous pageantry, relaxed, and learned to enjoy the quieter, simpler life of the new, peaceful epoch. Taste changed accordingly, and the arts adapted themselves to the new straight lines, the austerer forms.

Owing to ruined finances, the public made a virtue of necessity and found pleasure in a cheaper mode of daily routine. It became fashionable to be modest and homely. The family, so often torn apart during the wars, was happy to be united again, and the quieter "Biedermeier" era began, to end only thirty years later, when the storm of European revolutions brought renewed thunder.

For the time being, however, amiability was the mode, comfortableness was a slogan, and everybody endeavoured to be pleasant and agreeable. Time seemed not to count, the very tempo of life was retarded. Grand style festivities disappeared, large public gatherings were abhorred and the small cosy rooms were preferred to palatial apartments.

The rich baroque interiors, and heavy renaissance furniture, the gold-laden pompousness of aristocratic rococo days, and the boastfulness of the parvenu Empire, made place for the plainer, more modest taste of commoners. Expensive ornaments were discarded; the costly imported mahogany and ebony were now replaced by home-grown cherry and birchwood; quality was preferred to meretricious value.

People could no longer afford heavy hangings of damask and brocade, so light muslin curtains were used to adorn the windows, and at last the sunlight was allowed to dispel the Gothic semi-darkness.

As gold and silver plate were too expensive, the cheerful, flower-decorated *vieux Saxe* and cut glass, lent a pleasing

Like a sort of cultural freemasonry, small circles formed these cheerful tables; consisting only of the family, and a few

friends, or a witty hostess attracted companions of a similar outlook, and created a *salon*, a rendezvous for intellectuals, where people assembled, not to find a free meal, but to discuss the questions of the day, to listen, to breathe a cultured atmosphere.

Music-lovers gathered round the piano, in the days when Schubert was emptying his musical cornucopia, and his songs were born on the spur of the moment. The four Fröhlich sisters! Fanny Elssler! Who can name them all, these women of Central Europe, in whose homes thinkers and artists found a refuge for a few inspiring hours, where the faintly amorous atmosphere was charged with the electricity of wit and humour, and spiced with a little gossip, all radiating from the hostess and echoed by the guest, as the resonance-strings of a viola d'amore prolong the notes of the melody?

We, in our fast-living age, cannot understand how one lifetime sufficed for all their activities. To write long and beautiful letters, and keep detailed diaries, to find leisure for aesthetic hobbies, to be experts in exquisite needlework and other domestic arts!

Each home was a small museum; the modest collections were proudly displayed in their glass cases; examples of the hostess's handiwork, little curios, bric-à-brac, and sentimental trifles. There were masterpieces in silk, china, paper and silver foil, the decorated ruby glasses, pressed flowers, souvenir albums full of graceful inscriptions, poems, and drawings, each having its own story, its own soul.

Small, homely restaurants were frequented, where the proprietor and his wife were real friends and hosts, not thinking only of business, but offering credit if towards the end of the month the gentlemen had emptied their purses, or if the hard world had treated them a little roughly. For even in those amiable days poverty was not rare, and Franz Schubert, whose handwritten scraps are now carefully treasured in museum safes, earned during the whole of his thirty-one years of life only £575 for all his compositions, and when he died his clothes and effects, including five hundred pieces of music, were sold for fifty shillings, the five hundred manuscripts having been valued at eight shillings and sixpence by the auctioneer.

But living was cheap; a glass of wine, a stein of light beer cost little at the "Green Anchor," where the painter Schwind, the dramatist Grillparzer and all Schubert's friends were accustomed to meet, and where grumpy, deaf Beethoven took his meals. It was no dearer in any of the other establishments with the picturesque names—the eating-houses of Central Europe, the little confectioners' shops, those forerunners of the café, where men could meet and talk, discussing the weather, books, music, paintings, and life in general.

Painters preferred the miniature style, pale pastel shades and water-colours were in vogue, music became subdued, quartets and trios were fancied, chamber music was born.

Literary taste also had changed, the romantic novel came into fashion. The affected and sentimental hero, the Werther type, was created, and a people full of *jose de turre* delighted in lachrymose romances and sentimental verse. Not only their own writers, but Sir Walter Scott, Byron, and Eugene de Sue were read in the original or translations.

But under these harmless activities a strong political undercurrent was flowing, and just as the upright writing desk then so fashionable often has a secret drawer, so this amiable social life had more than one might have expected.

While the "good Emperor Francis," who once confided to a certain professor that he did not want learned subjects, but only good ones, and his all powerful chancellor Metternich believed that the people had been lulled to sleep by the soporifics of art and pleasure, they were in reality very wide awake, and were only pretending to sleep.

Poems, plays and novels had a double meaning, and modern journalism began when Heine, describing French grievances and French maladministration, was in reality castigating the state of affairs in Germany, Austria, and other countries under absolutist rule, and when Borne and E. T. A. Hoffmann evaded the strict State control of books by similar methods.

The stage, lyric and dramatic poetry, and popular wit and humour all played their part in this game of political hide and seek. The cunning procedure of the Austrian secret police and the censors taught people to be careful and crafty. It might seem that all was quiet, that people were interested only in their artistic hobbies, that the last flicker of revolutionary passion was long extinct, but deep in the ashes there glimmered sparks which were ready to be blown into roaring flames.

These thirty quiet years, when people wrote such graceful love-letters, in such a perfect hand, and were seemingly absorbed by their aesthetic interests, were in fact a political school of the first rank. The tournaments of wit in the *salons*, the discussions around the hospitable table, in rooms lit by candles or the warm glow of oil lamps, sharpened the intellect and prepared the ground for ideas that were soon to be born.

This was the last period of human history in which the things of the intellect were predominant, before they were finally swamped by technical inventions, and leisure was abolished by speed.

Post-chaises had not yet been driven off the roads by the railways, these, in turn, had not been superseded by the motor car.

and the aeroplane. The machine, still primitive, had not yet killed the handicrafts ; the silhouette portrait was the *dernier cri*, not yet put out of count by Daguerre, music was music, not canned noise, and the raree-show satisfied a naïve public whose great-grandchildren were to be bored even by " talkies " and the wireless.

But the Biedermayer period was already crouching for the great leap into industrialism, drawing the last deep breath before the mad spurt of mechanisation began.

It was when our great-grandfathers were quietly smoking their pipes, and the ideas, until then reserved for a privileged few, were becoming popularised, and spreading from the aristocracy to the general public, that the foundation of our modern world was laid. The factory shouldered the small workshop aside, and as everything was fated to become industrialised, the circle of friends, the miniature cultural freemasonry, had to move from the small, round birchwood tables, with their cheerful china, into the coffee-house and the street, and the subtle ideas were mangled by the brutal press.

It was not only the harmless Biedermayer period that spread its fashions, exporting its simple rectilinear furniture, its light muslin dresses, its souvenir albums and elegant snuffboxes ; but along the Danube, over the mountains, travelled ideas ; in slow post-chaises, hidden in postbags, in the dusty corners of packing-cases or in little bouquets of flowers, the microbes of a new way of thinking were being distributed. The invasion of the new thoughts, with their latent and explosive potentialities, was as yet imperceptible, a thing neither seen nor heard, a contagion from human being to human being, a presentiment of things to come rather than any explicit notion or conception. Camouflaged under the pale pastel-shades of contemporary taste, the cool water-colour tones, the vivid red of the future was lurking, and the subdued harmonies of chamber music were only a prelude to the strains which were to change the whole mentality of mankind.

For the time being, however, people did not worry themselves unduly, for life in Ofen was just as pleasant as in Vienna or in Prague ; all seemed to be going well, and one had a great deal of leisure ; little things were of the greatest importance, and news still travelled very slowly.

When, therefore, the grocer Joseph Semmelweis, tired after a sleepless night, slowly descended the stairs leading from the flat which he and his " family " occupied, to his shop on the ground floor, he knew that a very interesting day awaited him. He had great news for his *clientèle*. The personal contact between customer and shop-keeper had not yet been lost ; the mammoth department-store was a development of the future ; business was still carried out in a friendly and sociable spirit.

Well, to-day he could inform the ladies and gentlemen who frequented his shop that he now really had a "family" Like all other fathers of a first, newly born child, especially if it be, as in his case, a SON, Semmelweis had an irrational feeling that everybody would be almost as excited as he was himself, that the entry into this world of his first offspring was something absolutely out of the ordinary—that this day, the first of July 1818, was a red letter day not for him alone

The grocer was a successful man, the one storied building, in the best part of Ofen, facing the Vienna Pest post road, was his own property, and as the Franciscan monastery, with its church, consecrated to St Stephen, was quite close, many people passed his shop window and eventually became his customers

His sign boards informed prospective buyers, in German and Hungarian, that Herr Semmelweis was able to provide them with most articles of daily consumption, and he had spent quite a packet of money to inform even the many illiterates who could neither write nor read, of the comprehensive nature of his stock

He was never tired of admiring the sign painter's masterpiece which adorned the outside of his premises, the sugarloaf in white and blue, the bag of flour, the bottles in all colours of the rainbow, the kerchiefs and the rolls of cloth, all painted so vividly and naturally that one was tempted to touch them But this morning he had no time to admire the sign, nor even to watch his apprentice sweep the floor, an operation he never failed to superintend on other days

This operation was not a simple one First, the floorboards had to be moistened with the aid of a special watering-can, the water being sprinkled in sweeping lines, which described geometrical figures, and as the shop assistants usually put their hearts into these artistic water drawings, preferring a design which resembled a succession of elongated figure eights, these gentry became popularly known all over Austria Hungary as "the wet eights," a name of which they were by no means proud The rest of the job was just ordinary sweeping, and did not require the great skill which the preliminaries suggested

In the meantime the first customer had arrived He was delighted to hear the good news, and after congratulating the proud father, warned him to keep the bedroom windows tightly closed, so that Mrs Semmelweis should not be poisoned by the miasma emanating from the gutter, assuredly the cause of the fever which kills many mothers in childbirth

As his feminine customers that morning did not fail to seize the opportunity of frightening the grocer, assuring him, with the morbid optimism of the suburban housewife, that the mother of his first-

born was just as likely to die as to live, he began to feel quite worried, and soon returned upstairs to his flat.

But surely his wife was looking quite well? or was she already flushed, and ought he to try one of the many preventive and curative medicaments which his customers had suggested? A spoonful of pulverised mortar from the cemetery wall, a decoction of church-yard soil, or, surest of all, cobwebs in milk? There is no harm in trying, he thought; and the elderly midwife was quite reasonable about it, and helped him to prepare the stuff, while she sympathetically related some of her own awful experiences.

It all seemed to help, and a few days later the good wife was again serving customers, while the baby boy, little Ignatz, or as his parents lovingly called him, little Natzi, smacked his lips, or howled at the top of his voice, so that the windows rattled. "A vigorous youngster; he will make a fine grocer one day!" thought Semmelweis senior; but Ignatz Semmelweis showed little inclination to take over the shop. He proved an excellent scholar, and as his father could afford it, he proceeded in due time to the famous university of Vienna, there to study law.

One day, in a spirit of curiosity, he accompanied a friend, a medical student, to the dissecting-room of a hospital. Whatever it was that attracted him, he abandoned the law for medicine, and became a doctor at the late age of twenty-six, having lost some years by the exchange.

He now entered, as an assistant, the Vienna General Hospital, Joseph II's foundation, and there he saw, to his horror, that even in this fine institution over 12 per cent. of the women patients were killed by puerperal fever. Why, no one knew; his chief, Professor Klein, only shrugged his shoulders; an ignorant, conceited windbag, he advised Semmelweis not to worry himself unduly, and not to poke his nose into other people's affairs.

But Semmelweis was under the impression that these poor dying wretches were *his* business, and he set to work on the problem in the methodical way that was characteristic of him.

Why were there so many cases of puerperal fever in this teaching hospital, and so few in other institutions, where there were no medical students, and so few when children were born in private homes? Had it anything to do with the medical students? He kept away from the patients, but matters were no better. Then one day a colleague, who had pricked himself with a dissecting-needle, died of blood-poisoning, and his symptoms were similar to those of a woman afflicted with the dreadful scourge. That put him on the right track, and in the spring of 1847, when Lister was still a very young medical student, Ignatz Semmelweis began to use chlorinated lime water to disinfect the hands and instruments of

the attendant doctors and midwives. The result was staggering. Before the end of the same year the mortality from this malady had fallen by 9 per cent—from 12 per cent to 3 per cent! During the following year, while Semmelweis watched his assistants and students with the vigilance of a policeman as they washed their hands, the result was still better, less than 1 per cent of the women died in his ward!

When Ferdinand Hebra recorded this fact in the *Proceedings* of the Vienna Medical Society for December 1847, Klein, jealous and infuriated, used all his influence to have Semmelweis removed from his hospital. Despairing and disgusted, he returned to his native city, Budapest, only to find that the medical faculty there was no less reactionary and clannish than in the Imperial capital.

His book on "The Aetiology and Prevention of Puerperal Fever," one of the most important medical works ever written, was not published until thirteen years later, and even to-day there are few outside the medical profession who know the name of the man whose discovery is described in these words by Fernand Vidal, the famous French pathologist:

"Semmelweis was the first to indicate all the prophylactic measures that must be taken against puerperal fever. He did this with such precision that modern antiseptics had nothing to add to the rules which he prescribed."

Broken in body and soul, Semmelweis died at the age of forty-seven in a Vienna lunatic asylum, by the irony of fate, from blood-poisoning following a dissection wound. The Calvary of this grocer's son, who was one of humanity's greatest benefactors, will remain for all time a blot on the shield of civilisation, and no monument or memorial can ever repay the debt which mankind owes to him.

Semmelweis had, however, several forerunners of whom he did not know. But they did not propagate any practical methods to save the victims, nor did they fight the battle for the dying women with his energy.

A treatise on puerperal fever, clearly stating the contagiousness of this disease, was already written in 1795 by Doctor Alexander Gordon of Aberdeen, while Oliver Wendell Holmes, the Boston surgeon, published an article on these lines when Semmelweis was still a medical student.

This appeared in the *New England Quarterly Journal of Medicine and Surgery* in April 1843. But as the paper had only a very restricted circulation and died a natural death when it was less than a year old, Holmes's investigation had not the publicity it deserved, while in later years his occupation with poetry and other literary work left him little time to pursue the idea.

But we now have to knit up the ravelled thread of history, and go back to the days when the grocer still cherished the hope that his son Ignatz would become a successful business man.

Customers hurried in and out of the little general store in Ofen, buying groceries, cloth for a new dress, a whip-handle, or whatever they required of all the various articles offered there for sale. Business was carried on in a most friendly way, spiced with a little gossip ; items of news were exchanged, more or less sensational, the local news seeming more important than tidings from far away. The rumour that to-day was so exciting would have lost its topical value by the morrow, and when the news arrived that the last hour had struck for the man who had kept Europe so long under a reign of terror, and had left such a trail of blood and sorrow behind him, no one was very greatly interested.

Bonaparte's last words before he died were : " France, tête d'armée, Josephine ! " On May 5, 1821, at eleven minutes to six, when the sun was sinking into the ocean, Napoleon's life ended. With his death closed one of the most stirring chapters of our human history.

CHAPTER VI

THE MAD COUNT

For the past two years the people of Old Ofen had been watching the building operations. Ever since the first batch of navvies had arrived, setting to work on digging the foundations as soon as they had consumed their *al fresco* breakfast, they had been the object of constant attention.

How many spadefuls of earth did it take to fill a wheelbarrow? The spectators knew, they counted them. They checked the number of cartloads of soil which were carried away, and the slightest change in the order or nature of the operations was noted and commented upon. Their verbal bulletins were circulated as promptly as though the health of some eminent invalid had been in question.

"This morning the bricklayers have arrived!"

The sensational report ran through the town like wild fire. In an hour, the whole of Old Ofen knew that the bricklayers were ready to begin work. Not only the Jewish community, which was actually concerned, but the Catholics, the Protestants, and even the few Mohammedan families who still remained in the neighbourhood—all were agog with the news.

There were always crowds of onlookers about the building site. They were often pushed back by the workmen, whose movements they hindered, but a few minutes later they would be back at their posts. Children going to school, or returning home, went out of their way to catch a glimpse of the workmen, and were late for their lessons or their dinner. Watch in hand, the old age pensioners—those favoured spectators who had nothing better to do than to stand and stare—would carefully time the arrival and departure of the labourers, expressing their disapproval at the slightest interruption or delay.

Hucksters were quick to seize the opportunity afforded by the presence of so many people, and soon an informal market sprang up. In the summer water melons and other fruits, cooling drinks, vividly coloured, but of doubtful composition, basketfuls of steaming corn-cobs, salted cracknels and cakes were offered for sale, while the younger generation created a boom in barley sugar and consumed tons of black liquorice.

The colder season attracted chestnut roasters, and vendors of baked pumpkins, potatoes in their jackets, and Frankfurter sausages,

one and all doing a profitable business. But the occasion brought even greater prosperity to the taverns, wine-shops and "Royal Tobacconists" of the neighbourhood. These little cigar-shops boasted of this imposing title because they sold the products of the State factories, the manufacture of cigars and tobaccos being the monopoly of the Crown.

People did not stand and watch merely because it is pleasant to take one's ease and see others exerting themselves. Here was a special object of interest. This was "our Synagogue," then in the process of erection.

Well, in a way it was only the Hebrews who were interested; but, on the other hand, the new building would become a landmark for the whole district, the finest Jewish temple in the Monarchy, much grander than the celebrated Lemberg one that they made such a fuss about.

This one was designed by Andreas Landherr, the famous architect, who had built so many palaces and public buildings in the Imperial city and in Pest. As for Pest, by the way, the Jews never had a decent synagogue there, as the town council used to make such difficulties about allowing them to live within the city boundaries. Had they not made themselves a laughing-stock only recently, when Baron Oppenheim, the Imperial Court banker, was compelled, during his stay, to come evening after evening to Old Ofen, as he could not obtain a permit to pass the night in Pest or Ofen, although he had come on some official errand?

Lately things had changed a little; the Emperor had given orders and the aristocracy had exerted their authority to enforce the Josephine laws. The municipal reactionaries had to give way at last, and Jews could now take up their residence in the city, open business houses and build factories, and make things hum a bit!

Still, they had nothing comparable to "our Synagogue" and the Old Ofeners rubbed their hands. How they will stare to see what a "village" of seven thousand five hundred inhabitants can do! A village, indeed—it is not so long ago that Pest was nothing to boast of! Even if it was shooting up now like a mushroom! Or Ofen, that citadel of conceited philistines, which had, when Emperor Joseph died, twenty-four thousand inhabitants, and now, after thirty years, still had only twenty-five thousand, while Pest had trebled her population within the same period, from sixteen thousand to forty-eight thousand. . . .

So the idlers spoke as they watched the building rise from the ground, the temple, slowly taking shape.

Scaffoldings went up, lines and contours could soon be recognised, pillars arrived, other huge mysterious packets came, day after day

something new happened, was observed, discussed, kept the population out of breath.

People strolled over from Pest and Ofen, went past under all kinds of pretext, just giving sidelong glances, pretending that they were really not interested, and had come that way only by accident. It was a grand time for Old Ofen, a good time for everybody, especially for the three thousand Jews who lived there, and had never before been so pleasantly in the limelight.

Then came the great day, when the Synagogue, like a shining, white Greek temple, stood there in all its splendour and beauty, the entablature carried by six Corinthian columns, their bases and capitals richly carved, the lavishly decorated tympanum housing a large clock, its loud chimes, by a clever evasion of the strict Talmudic rules against the use of church bells, marking the hours.

The whole was crowned by the Tables of the Law. Since these were conspicuously visible from far away, were greeted by the rising sun, and received its last rays when the fiery ball sank behind the western hills, they became not only a symbol, but also a landmark for the Danube boatmen, and a sign, for the travellers on the Vienna-Pest post-road, that their journey was nearing its end.

As a member of the choir, my great-grandfather took part in the opening ceremony, and our family tradition made vague mention of a sword, most likely an ornamental one, and a three-cornered hat, which he was supposed to have worn during this ritual, or perhaps on some earlier occasion; but it became, in the course of time, quite a source of amusement for his unbelieving descendants.

The death of his mother, who passed away in February 1827, was the occasion of his last visit to Mattersdorf.

Wolf Weiss may have revisited the news exchange on the village stairs, or strolled down the Vulka promenade, and wandered through the old lanes and passages. There things would surely have looked as strange to him as they always look if one returns from a large community to a smaller one after thirty years of absence.

Not only do the houses and streets seem to have shrunk; the views of the people also seem to have become narrower. Or does one only imagine all this because one's own sense of proportion and outlook has changed?

Everything has become so small. Even the distances are shorter; the walk from the old home to the school, which seemed endless in childhood, now takes only a few minutes. How tiny the shops are!—and the miniature market-place, with its lilliputian synagogue, is withered and shrunken, like a very old lady.

The whole place might almost have been built by children, playing with a box of toy bricks; just so, it seems to him, the

suburbs used to look, when as a boy he climbed the Forchtenstein, or saw them from St. Rosalie's Chapel, high up in the hills.

This memory may have tempted him to visit the shrine again, to gaze once more on this panorama.

From this altitude the view seemed endless. There, immediately below one, was the once impregnable fortress of the Eszterházy, now an ornament only. Next to it was Mattersdorf, quite mediaeval from that distance, with its old Gothic church, its plague column, and its criss-cross lanes. What did they call it in olden times? Martinsdorf or Martyrsdorf? But the people seemed happy enough now; there was nothing of the martyr about them. Yet, has one the right to judge? Peaceful as everything looks from here, who can know how much trouble is hidden behind the walls of so many of those friendly cottages? The traces of war, tempest, fire and calamity are not visible after the wounds have healed, and landscapes soon forget what once swept over them; nature quickly covers up the scars.

On the other hand, there must be a good reason why each village should have such a plague column, dating from the days when epidemics were stayed by hymn-singing and processions; and even though it is now re-built, and looks as if nothing had ever happened to it, the old water-mill of Zemendorf was once burned down by Kara Mustapha's Turkish soldiery.

The village of Wabersdorf also has not changed very much. Many Roman relics were found there, and once even the remains of a whale. But the school-children of Wolf's days were convinced that someone must have brought the bones from somewhere far away, for they themselves had never seen anything larger than the Vulka sticklebacks.

From up here all seven communes are in full view. Eisenstadt, with its palace, the mountain church where Haydn rests, the old music-house, even Kittsee can be seen, and behind it the huge mirror of the Neusiedler See, and the endless Pannonian plains, bordered by the robber-infested Bakony forest.

How dark and sinister they look, even in the bright sunshine! Who would care to cross them alone? But the spring sky overhead, with its fluffy clouds, looks friendly enough.

Further south are the miniature mountains of the "Humpy World," their slopes covered with vineyards, and with millions of fruit trees, now in bloom, the orchards interspersed with corn-fields and pastures, as far as the eye can see. To the west, human dwellings become denser towards Vienna, until at last they amalgamate with the capital, forming one huge mass of houses, this picture framed by snow-capped Alps, the constant white of far-away glaciers. . . . All this had not changed in thirty years; p.

change. People may come and go; some stay at home, while others emigrate; here children are born, there a mother dies; the minutes, weeks, years and centuries pass into eternity as the sand trickles through an hour-glass; but the sky and the hills remain. The snow on the peaks may shrink a little in summer, and in winter spread its mantle wider; the little flowers and waving grasses fade in the autumn, but are reborn in the spring; only we have to go for good. . . .

Wolf and his wife had no children, and on the occasion of the census, taken that same year, he wrote sadly in the proper column of the official form: Two persons only, Leonora my wife and myself; signing this questionnaire with the name imposed on him by the officials, and not with that by which the people here knew him—Wolf, son of Simon Lazar the butcher and Jetty (who was now lying in that little graveyard). He signed it simply "Wolf Weiss," not even daring to insert the usual "Mattersdorf"; there is no sentimental nonsense about census papers.

But life has its surprises, and they are not all unpleasant. Soon after Christmas 1829, a son was born to them, Max Moritz by name, who became my grandfather, and Max was followed by three sisters and

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Roused from her dreams by the bustle and hubbub of the merchants and tradesmen who took up their residence within her walls, she found herself wooed by a real fairy prince who worked the miracle of her transformation, in the person of Count Stephen Széchenyi.

"The Count," as he was known in later years, was the third son of a family which had produced a number of well-known politicians, and the two most distinguished Archbishops of Hungary. Inspired by the spirit of European regeneration, or perhaps disgusted with the system of favouritism which had prevented his promotion beyond the rank of captain, he retired from the Austrian army after seventeen years of service.

Still in uniform, he addressed the Upper Chamber of the Diet, on the strength of his right as a Hungarian magnate, and he even dared to do this in Magyar. This speech was to bring him into the foremost rank of Hungarian patriots.

Hitherto, in order to avoid the use of the hated official language, Latin was always spoken in the debates, while French had become the idiom of the nobles, and the provincial languages—Czech, Croat, Magyar, etc.—were degraded to the rank of peasant dialects by the Court party.

By violating this tradition, and offering sixty thousand gulden

as a first contribution toward the foundation of a Hungarian Academy of Science, Széchenyi brought Magyar into vogue again, and aroused the local patriotism of the people.

By his extensive travels in western Europe, where England, more especially, with her ancient political traditions and modern technical progress attracted his attention, not only Pest was to profit, but in a lesser degree the whole Danubian basin.

He returned from his wanderings a convinced Anglomaniac ; but his adoption of foreign customs and habits was no mere thoughtless aping of forms and appearances. In spite of his appreciation of the London tailors, the good-looking Count was no Beau Brummel, but a reformer of the first rank, who dreamed dreams and saw visions.

By stimulating the love of sport, especially of horse-racing, he greatly improved the breed of the Hungarian horses, and the foundation of clubs drew the magnates closer together and gave the aristocracy a new outlook on life.

When on the advent of more peaceful days the nobles discarded the uniforms they had worn for generations, during the Turkish and Napoleonic wars, their habits and manners were changed with this change of garment, and their morals deteriorated. Court life was expensive ; it diverted them from properly supervising their estates and farming their land ; it led them astray and brought upon them the curse of debt. This latter evil spread like an infection to the civil servants and the bourgeoisie, imperilling the whole country.

The club and casino created new moral standards, and even though a certain amount of snobbishness resulted, the advantages of a saner perception of good and evil were more than enough to atone for this petty vice.

But Széchenyi's greatest accomplishment was his reform of Hungary's economic life. By the publication of his book on "Credit," which contained the gist of his researches into the causes of the lack of commercial credits in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, with suggestions for their removal, he put business and industry on a sound basis.

Being a disciple of Bentham's utilitarian doctrine, and strongly influenced by the Englishman's practical ideas, the Count dexterously adapted them to local circumstances, and using his own sane judgment, avoided dangerous experiments. In such matters Széchenyi was far above the ordinary politician, being, indeed, one of the outstanding statesmen of his century.

In his view the worst economic incubus, retarding all financial progress, was the fact that the law prevented landowners from selling their domains, or any part of them. C.

could not dispose of pledges, and being unable to lay hands upon the debtor's property, could not enforce their rights. This resulted in the prevalence of a vicious form of usury, tending to pauperise the nobles, who were all more or less bankrupt.

Sacrificing everything for the sake of luxury and ostentation, they could obtain the necessary means only at the cost of a ruinous rate of interest, and their consequent contempt for commerce was largely shared by the people.

Széchenyi taught them to regard commerce in a different light. He uttered the "Open Sesame!" that unlocked Hungary's natural resources, interested the aristocracy in business, and convinced them that the establishment of a profitable foreign trade was not an impossibility. The wretched condition of Hungarian commerce was not fundamentally due to Austria's jealousy, but to their own lethargy, and they alone were to blame for it.

His task was made easier by the fact that Court circles had decided to recognise a new wealthy middle class of people who had become rich, not through warfare and loot, but through application to commerce and industrial enterprise. Mixing with these people socially, the old noble families soon learned to appreciate "the Jew." They found that there were no secret horns hidden under imaginary skull-caps; they became interested in the views of these people, which were based on a slightly different, but ancient culture, and contracted friendships which proved most profitable, in every sense of the word, to both parties, and also to the country.

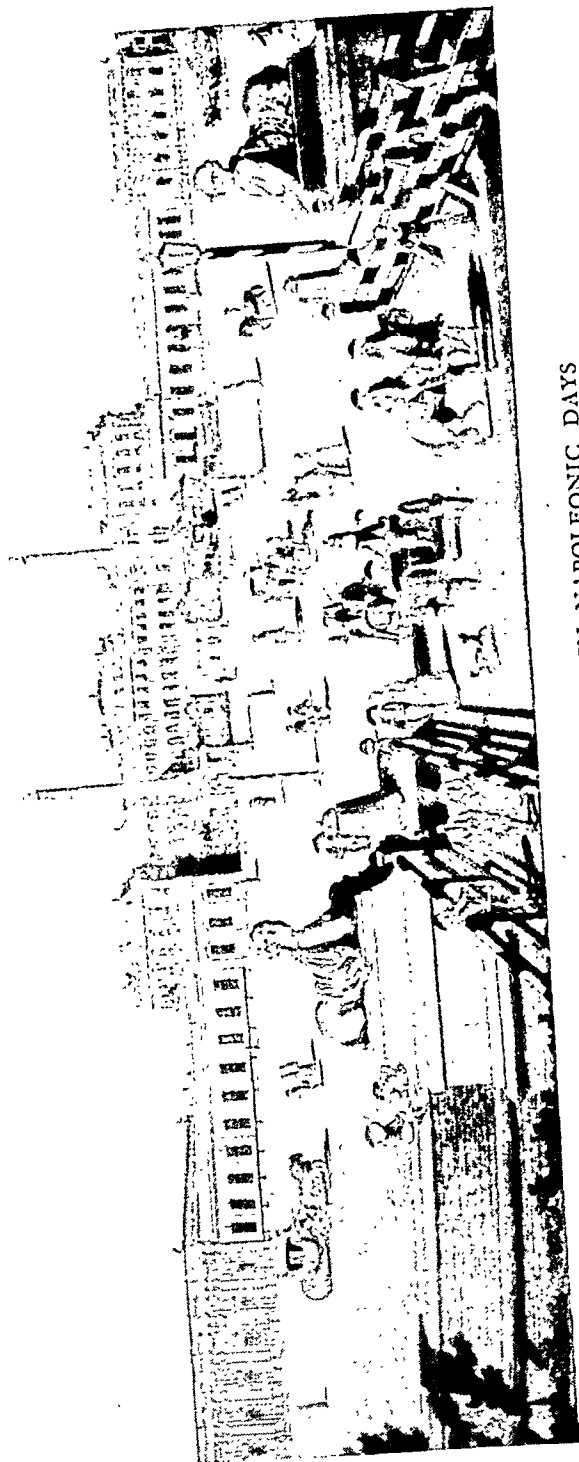
One of the few men in Central Europe to grasp the importance of Fulton's and Stephenson's inventions, and to realise the advantages to be obtained by the use of steel and iron by the architect and builder, the Count became a pioneer in this field, and raised Budapest to the level of the most modern of European capitals.

After carefully studying the principles of steam navigation, and exploring the Danube in a small boat from Pest to the Black Sea, Széchenyi formed a company, brought English engineers to Hungary, and induced the Government to commission him with the regulation of this river, and especially of the Iron Gate, one of its greatest obstacles.

The eddies and currents which rendered this passage so formidable—a constriction where the waters of the Danube rushed and roared past projecting rocks, around and over which the breakers were continuously tossing their foam—made this part of the river nearly impassable for navigation.

Here is some of the finest scenery of which Europe can boast, a constant succession of views of the wildest grandeur and sublimity.

Starting at a point where the Danube assumes the character of a spacious lake rather than that of a river, a boat, after gliding for



THE PALACE OF SCHOENBRUNN IN NAPOLEONIC DAYS

THE FORTRESS OF FORCETTASTIN



miles over untroubled waters, the river here being often a mile or more in width, was suddenly confronted with a narrow pass, where this immense volume of water was confined within a channel not exceeding four hundred feet from bank to bank, the defile of Kazan.

Its precipitous banks, rising, in almost unbroken masses, sheer from the water's edge to an amazing altitude, seem almost to blend with the clouds. But higher still, filling every ravine, and flinging their perennial masses of verdure over the inaccessible cliffs, oak forests that have never resounded to the woodman's axe, but have flourished in *primaeval* beauty through immemorial ages, cover the mountains.

Along the base of one precipitous bank runs the road of the Emperor Trajan, now only a narrow terrace, parallel with the river. Under this platform numerous square sockets were cut in the rock, in line and at regular intervals, into which the beams that supported the ancient highway were inserted. By laying a floor over these beams a hanging gallery was formed, providing a thoroughfare of convenient width above the Danube.

How the Romans, by sheer manual labour, contrived to open a military highway along the face of this tremendous gorge, is difficult to conceive. The vast quantities of timber which were necessarily employed in its construction, would have exposed the road to frequent dangers arising from decay and accidents. But the adoption of covered galleries, as employed in modern times by the engineers of Norway and Switzerland, protected it from the weather, while the skilful construction of the supporting timbers gave it the solidity necessary in a public highway.

By diverting torrents, and controlling the course of avalanches, these ancient masters of the world made the *Via Trajana* perfectly safe for traffic, and built themselves a monument for all time.

Széchenyi, who was made sole commissioner for improving the navigation of the lower Danube, left no stone unturned, and almost before the ink on his commission was dry a thousand men were at work in the narrow defile. The Count had one great advantage over the old Roman roadmakers; gunpowder did the work of the Roman's pick and chisel. New channels were cut, rocks were blasted, dams were built to divert the currents, and presently the dangerous cataracts were no more.

The new road was laid out on the opposite bank of the river to that followed by Trajan's highway, and the Danube was now navigable from the Black Sea right up to Regensburg, better known perhaps to English readers by its Latin name *Ratisbona*.

During building operations in the vicinity of the Iron Gate the remains were found of a bridge which Trajan had built at the order of the Emperor Hadrian.

had afterwards destroyed. When Széchenyi inspected the relics of this masterpiece of Roman engineering—the width of the river at this point being over 3,000 feet—he conceived the idea of constructing a permanent bridge connecting Ofen and Pest.

The project was soon realised, with the aid of Baron Sina, a Viennese banker of Greek descent, by means of the flotation of shares, the interest on which was to be paid by tolls imposed on nobles and commoners alike.

To say that Széchenyi had stirred up a hornets' nest is a feeble comparison. What? A Hungarian magnate to pay taxes? His fellow-nobles were furious. Undismayed, the Count inveighed against them in the Diet, lectured them in the Press, and ridiculed them in private, and in the end a Bill was passed in both Chambers, by which the taxation of the nobles, in form of a bridge toll, was legalised, and a precedent was created whereby the aristocracy lost their immunity from taxation, a privilege they had enjoyed since the days when the Magyars first came from Asia to the banks of the Danube.

The construction of the suspension bridge, still one of the finest in Europe, was entrusted to an Englishman, W. Tierney Clark, after whose sudden death Adam Clark, his brother, completed this great work.

But apart from the building of the first modern bridge and the first Danube steamer, quite a number of other Englishmen were busily employed in Hungary at this time, especially in the ship-yards of Old Ofen, where most of the foremen were Britons.

This may account for a special talent rooted in our family, a trick of picking up English expressions, not always of a classical character, dating perhaps from the days when my grandfather, then still an urchin, watched these men at work, and heard their heartfelt ejaculations when a hammer descended on a thumb or other tender part of their anatomy.

While preparations were being made on the Danube for the trial runs of the first steamer to descend the river, the July revolution in Paris gave the first impetus to a chain of events which had a decisive influence on the political structure of Europe.

But the citizens of Pest were not greatly concerned by the news of foreign upheavals; they were much more interested in the new technical marvel, the S.S. *Francis I*, which made its downward journey, from Vienna to Pest, in fourteen hours, and returned upstream in four days; in those times an unheard-of speed.

It soon, however, became obvious that the acceleration of traffic was not without its dangers, for the Asiatic cholera, brought to Hungary by some Polish emigrants, quickly spread to the West of Europe.

The epidemic of 1831 was one of the worst that this part of the world had ever experienced, and it took a terrible toll of life. In Pest alone two thousand five hundred people died, while in Vienna the mortality was even greater. But the gay Austrian capital seemed indifferent to the scourge, for the Viennese were captivated by the spell of Johann Strauss, whose fame had just reached its zenith.

The influence which this black magician exercised over his public can only be described as a hypnotic spell. The magnetism generated by Strauss's wild, hot-blooded tunes, the mesmeric dominance which this restless virtuoso exerted over his audience, cutting capers, jumping and dancing, playing the fiddle and conducting an orchestra at the same time, were comparable to the influence of a miracle-worker, or, perhaps one should say, of a snake-charmer.

The devil-may-care mood evoked by the magician, which seemed to make the people of Austria indifferent to the dangers of infection, also made them heedless of the political storms which were brewing in East and West, and insensitive to suffering and tragedy.

While the madness of a revived waltz-mania was sweeping over Vienna, only a few miles away, in Schönbrunn, one of the silent tragedies of human destiny was nearing its close.

There, in the same room, in the identical bed which his father had occupied on two memorable occasions, the Duke of Reichstadt, barely twenty-one years of age, faded out of life, and with him died the hope of the Bonapartists, who had thought to set Napoleon's son on the throne of France.

The birth of this child represented, for Napoleon, the possibility of reconciliation with the old monarchies, and a strong guarantee for his new Empire; but after the Emperor's downfall he was merely a pawn in the game of politics, a tool in the cunning fingers of Metternich, and the bearer of an empty title: Napoleon II.

One can see from the Duke's letters that he was treated much more kindly by his grandfather, Francis I, and the Court of Vienna, than later plays and literature would suggest. He received an excellent education, and enjoyed every freedom, and his military ambitions were satisfied when he became, at the age of seventeen, a captain in the Emperor's favourite regiment, the Tyrolean Rifles. But after three years in the army the young Duke, then a lieutenant-colonel, was, to his great regret, obliged by ill-health to resign his commission.

Excessive exercise, and especially too much riding, undermined his by no means robust constitution, and the pulmonary tuberculosis which resulted was quickly fatal. He was taken to Schönbrunn, where his condition became rapidly worse, excluding all hope of recovery.

Marie Louise, who was living in Parma, and who, after the death of Count Neipperg, had attached herself to Count Bombelles, an Austrian diplomatist of French origin, now came to visit her dying son.

Whether the sensual and voluptuous character, latent in her younger days, and gradually manifesting itself in later years, was a reaction against the unworldly and bigoted education received at her father's court, is difficult to judge. Released from the strict Spanish etiquette, which ignored temperament and repressed emotion, the woman who in her youth found it easy to leave Napoleon, now, in her riper years, obsessed by erotic passion, became the willing slave of these men.

France accused Marie Louise of coldness of heart; and when we read that she was able to leave her son, in the last hours of his fatal illness, to the care of servants, not even being present when he drew his final breath, we can understand the bitterness of the historian who wrote "At the King of Rome's cradle the whole world gathered in acclamation, while even his mother is absent from the Duke of Reichstadt's death bed!"

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The sudden downfall of the Bourbons in France, whose rule was based solely on the aristocracy and clergy, made the other European potentates realise the insecurity of their position.

A few became more accessible to reforms, or at least pretended to favour them, while the rest attempted to strengthen their position by taking still firmer reactionary measures, renewing the drive against the Jacobins and other revolutionary circles.

The Habsburgs tried both methods. Some small concessions were granted, but more was promised than was actually performed, and at the same time the police system was overhauled and reinforced, and all unreliable elements were removed.

The same policy was applied in the army, where great changes took place. Many of the officers unexpectedly received "an umbrella"—that is, were retired from active service; some favoured individuals came into the limelight, while others disappeared. As always in dangerous times, a "general post" of partitions was ordered, the "Burg" finding it politic to send regiments recruited from Slavonic districts into Italy, Magyars, who hated the Wallachs into Transylvania, Poles into the Tyrol, Styrians into Galicia, and *vice versa*—a cunning policy, which prevented the soldiers from becoming too friendly with local populations, by reason of language difficulties and differences of mentality. If a few salvoes had to be fired, what of it? "Let the *Bourbons* see that one is ready to teach them a lesson if they are too unruly, they

wouldn't think twice about doing the same to our people!" So the soldier may have thought, surrounded by an alien population.

As it was necessary to make a few material concessions, the military law was reformed, and the time of service was reduced to ten years; a great improvement, if one considers the fact that until then the common soldier had to serve all his life, or until totally disabled.

The method of recruiting became less brutal; a system of conscription was introduced, based on the census.

Nevertheless, the political skies became darker; people began to be vitally interested in politics; the man in the street expressed his feelings, notwithstanding the ubiquity of informers; new names came to the fore, there was a great deal of grumbling, and things were no longer so *gemütlich*, so pleasant and easy.

In Pressburg, the seat of the Hungarian Diet, an ordinary provincial lawyer, one Louis Kossuth, had been making himself troublesome. He was a man to watch; he seemed to be poking his nose into affairs which the authorities considered were none of his business. This Kossuth had published some Parliamentary reports, a sort of Hungarian Hansard, so that the proceedings could be read by one and all. As Metternich found such a novelty detestable, he ordered the confiscation of Kossuth's press. But there was no bad feeling; indeed, the cost price of the machinery was actually refunded to the publisher.

But this disobliging fellow, this Kossuth, still persisted in recording the proceedings of the Diet; he now copied the reports by hand, a number of students helping him, and the manuscript reports were circulated as freely as the printed ones had been.

In March 1835 Francis I died. The good old man deserved his rest. He had been married four times; his first wife was that ill-fated Elizabeth, whom Joseph II had loved so dearly, and who died in childbirth while still so young; while Carolina Augusta, his last consort, survived the Emperor. It was much more peaceful down in the cool Capucin crypt than up in Schönbrunn; he was tired after all those troubles with the Corsican and the lawless elements in the Empire. The family had given him some headaches, too; the elder boy, Ferdinand, suffered from epileptic fits; the other son also was peculiar; people even said that he was mentally deficient; and then, there was the daughter in Parma . . . well, he had little joy of his life.

The Crown Prince Ferdinand was now anointed Emperor, in spite of his nervous disorders. The strange smile that never left his face did not prevent him from being a very kindly man, who gave but little trouble, leaving everything to Metternich, or to certain of the ladies of the Court, especially the Archduchess

She was the wife of his brother Charles Francis and the mother of that bright and promising boy Francis Joseph, for whom the new Emperor had such an affection.

But this sister in law Sophia, though she never wore the crown, became in fact the ruler of the Habsburg monarchy for many years to come. A Bavarian princess by birth, she filled a dominating rôle, as had Maria Theresa during her own reign, and the Archduchess Sophia's influence on Europe's destiny should not be underestimated.

For a while, however, things seemed to settle down again; even business was good. The Vienna Rothschilds, having relatives wherever it was worth while to have them, and consequently excellent sources of information, bought, in the spring of 1836, before anyone else could have dreamt of such a thing, the railroad concession for a line from Vienna to Galicia.

The Austrian aristocracy, impressed by the great success and immense popularity of Széchenyi, were now eager to try their luck in business ventures, a veritable scramble began for railroad concessions.

Prices rocketed upwards, and before long Baron Sina had to pay more for a permit to build a comparatively short railway from the capital to Pressburg than the first far sighted concessionaires had paid for the privilege of constructing a railway to Poland.

The first sector of the Rothschilds' railway, from Vienna to Wagram, was opened by the Emperor Ferdinand in 1837. This event, however, created less of a sensation than might have been expected, for at the same time the Viennese heard the news that "their Strauss" has just been introduced by Prince Esterházy to Queen Victoria, during the ceremonies attending her coronation.

Strauss in London! Brilliant festivities, unheard-of luxury, money poured out like water.

I see from the records of the Old Ofen Savings Bank that my great grandfather's total savings consisted at that time of 12 gulden 30 kreutzer. The fruits of thrift, at the age of sixty, amounted to the staggering sum of about one pound sterling. Not enough to enable him to pour out money like water, though this very element washed away his savings, and the Savings Bank itself, during the spring thaws of 1838, when a flood of unprecedented and catastrophic violence devastated the banks of the Danube.

It began as usual. The ice piled up, the waters rose, the levées burst and were repaired, and on March 13, just after dark, the waves advanced so suddenly that the people watching the provisional barriers had no time to flee, and two hundred perished. Soon all the streets were filled with blocks of ice; houses collapsed, the uproar and the terror of that night were indescribable. For four

days the Danube rose, and when on the 17th the waters began to ebb, of the four thousand two hundred and fifty houses in Pest two thousand three hundred had ceased to exist, eight hundred were badly, and one thousand and fifty less severely damaged, while in Old Ofen only ninety-one out of a total of seven hundred and sixty were unharmed.

Széchenyi, with many others, did what human power could do, and financial help arrived from all parts of the world for the benefit of the tens of thousands who had lost everything. But the Count somehow took this inundation as a personal matter, which was not only directed against his own city, the fairy princess of his dreams; for Széchenyi it became an obsession that the Danube had revenged itself upon the man who had sought to control its waters. This calamity only added to the many worries that were troubling his mind.

He knew that the mixed marriage between Austria and Hungary was not a perfect union, but one that harboured great dangers. He was convinced, however, that only tact and understanding could avert these dangers, and that the constant heckling of the Court party by the Magyars could only do harm.

Notwithstanding his many conservative ideas Széchenyi was himself a revolutionary; but he was strongly opposed to the overthrow of the existing State by force: he preferred the middle course, and was averse from violent action. In some respects his way of thinking resembled that of the liberal trend of thought, and the Count's mind was torn by the liberal despot's double nature, except that Széchenyi never dealt with questions of religion or nationality.

This attitude brought him into conflict with the extremists, emerging more and more into the foreground of public life. The Count warned him to leave criticism alone, to restrain his spirit, and to leave both striving for the same end, they were following the same path; could they not work on parallel lines? Széchenyi was not an extremist, a typical agitator, but he was a man of strong ways and means, and in consequence he was often in prison by the authorities; this was the only way to prevent his followers from continuing the work.

Széchenyi foresaw the end of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He withdrew himself to his practical work.

The construction of the railway was a great work, and the workmen employed in it were many.

solid wall of stone, for whose existence no one was able to account, until, on searching the national records, it was discovered that King Mathias Corvinus had contemplated and even commenced the erection of a bridge over the Danube on this very spot, some four centuries earlier.

Corvinus the wise! A ruler of whom Magyar peasants still cherish their dreams, hoping against hope that Mathias will return one day, bringing with him justice and happiness for Hungary.

The Hungarian schoolboys were less optimistic, they knew that the illustrious king was dead "for keeps," and although he might have left many fine institutions for the benefit of their elders, his only legacy to them was a lot of historical dates, and the methods of impressing these upon their memories had not changed very greatly since his days. Max Moritz Weiss soon came to a similar conclusion on entering an Old Ofen school, where he now had to spend most of his time, instead of happily strolling among the Buda hills, or risking life and limb by jumping in and out of the river in the neighbourhood of the Danube shipyards.

This school, like most of the schools in Pest and Ofen, taught mainly in Magyar, while the older generation still spoke German only. A strange method of conversation resulted, the parents speaking one language and the children answering in another, while servants and labourers often contributed their own dialects—Slovak, Wallach, Serb or what not.

My grandfather, as time went on, had to think of a job, and at the age of fifteen he entered the workshop of a local cap-maker as an apprentice.

Herr Carl Steiner, who was well known for his hats and caps, manufactured not only the peaked fur caps which are still preferred by the Hungarian peasants, but also many of the other forms of headgear which were favoured by the various nationalities of the Danubian basin.

Max soon got used to the strange odour emanating from the dressed lambskins, and learned all the intricacies of the trade, nailing the pelts on a stretching board, cutting them into shape with sharp knives, sewing the pieces together, and placing the caps on wooden blocks for the final shaping. He became an expert in distinguishing the black Transylvanian lambskins generally used for this purpose, for only the very wealthy could afford Persian and other imported skins, while the poorest bought cloth imitations of the genuine articles.

So that they should give warmth in the coldest of winters, the caps were lined with white baby lambskins, and then, ready to wear, taken to market.

The cap maker's was an interesting trade, one met fur merchants,

who travelled all over the world, some of them even using the railway, and telling almost incredible stories. How the pelts and furs were carried by caravans from the centre of Asia to Nijni Novgorod, or collected by enterprising people from the Red Indian trappers, and shipped across the ocean to be sold by auctions in London, or at the famous Leipzig fair. A trade old as humanity itself, and full of romance, the raw material coming from all corners of the globe. To be a real expert one had to know something of the ways of trapping and hunting, have some understanding of animal life, and of geography, master the technical process of curing and dressing the raw skins, and learn all the tricks of sorting and classifying, the method of valuing, and a hundred other details. But one had, at the same time, to be a psychologist, for the cap-maker must understand the mentality of his customers, the weaknesses of vanity, and the rules of fashion. No, it was never boring; as one sat at the bench, hammering, cutting and stitching, one could dream of wonderlands, build airy castles in Spain, and think of the days when one would be able to travel far and wide, visiting foreign auction-rooms, and piling up a fortune.

But there was no need to look so far ahead; there was plenty of fun to be had in the present, especially on market-days, when the master took him to Pest, or to other fairs. Then one could wander about among the stalls, and see all the strange people; for instance, the Armenians who brought the raw sheepskins from Transylvania, or the pelts of martens, foxes and otters which they had collected from all parts of the Balkans. One could watch the country folk as they admired one's display; they would first stand there for hours before even opening their mouths, and then the haggling would go on for the whole morning, until at last a bargain was struck, after all the caps had been tried on, while the giggling women made their silly remarks. The buyer would never discard the precious cap; it would remain on his head in the hottest of summers and in the storms of winter, and he would have liked to wear it even in bed if custom had permitted. It was a fine trade and young Max loved it.

Then, after three years of apprenticeship, came the day—it was April 1, 1847—when the master entered a testimonial in the new journeyman's book which Max had obtained that very morning from the Old Ofen police.

All this was very exciting; to become a qualified journeyman one had to obtain permits and visas, for travelling was made a very complicated business, even within the frontiers of one's own country; moreover, the haughty officials were not always friendly, but would make people wait for hours on end.

But at last everything was settled. Mother cried a little, father

patted him on the back, and then he stood on the great post-road, hoping that someone would give him a lift, for the royal mail was out of the question as being too expensive.

One can see from the entries in his journeyman's book that his travels took him right to the borders of Transylvania, then to the south of Hungary, where Ujvidék and Zimony look out over Serbia. Then, following the course of the Danube and the Drave, he came through Croatia and Styria to Vienna. Working for a few days, here, there and everywhere, making a gulden or so to provide him with the means of covering the next stage, for he was modest in his requirements, and knew nothing of luxury, he covered this great distance as a journeyman cap-maker.

In the Austrian capital the official stamps were very imposing; here everything was Imperial and Royal; lordly signatures filled the pages of the humble road-book, and permits couched in the intimidating style of the Court bureaucrat put the modest entries of the provincial functionaries to shame. Now a few foreign visas were added, shewing that Germany was then only a conglomerate of many small states and statelets, each little King, Duke or Prince having an ambassador at the Court of the Habsburgs, where he collected fees for permits, did what he could to justify his own existence, and doubtless felt very important.

In spite of all these difficulties Max Weiss went marching on, reaching Breslau, Baudisin, and Rumburg in August, and, passing through Dresden, strolled along the Elbe to Meissen. There he left Saxony, to cross the border into Bohemia, where he made for Prague, returning, after an absence of eight months, on New Year's Day of 1848, to Old Ofen.

CHAPTER VII

HUNGARIAN HURLY-BURLY

Quite prepared to settle down to a job, now that he was a fully-qualified worker who had seen the world and acquired some experience, Max Weiss entered into service with his old master. The workshop was homely and familiar; there one could work and dream at the same time, while the needle went in and out of the lambskins, or the hammer drove the nails into the stretching-board. Herr Steiner and his employees were a happy family. The journeymen would exchange opinions, or relate what they had seen and heard; or someone would read out items from the newspaper, while the rest went on with their work.

The news was none too pleasant. France was again in a state of revolution; Louis Philippe of Orleans had abdicated, and the Republic was proclaimed. Two new names had come into the headlines—Marx and Engels; it seemed that they had published a Communist Manifesto. No one in the cap-maker's workshop really knew what this meant, but for all that the news was exciting; for spring was in the air, and March was always a restless month, the season for social upheavals. Accordingly, no one was surprised when Kossuth, in a speech delivered in the Pressburg Diet, called upon Hungary to rise in revolution, and the country became the first of the Habsburg Crownlands to demand autonomy.

Naturally, people wanted to know more about this Kossuth; who was he, and where did he come from?

Born in 1802, the son of a Hungarian petty noble, by profession an advocate, and a German mother, both of whom were ardent Protestants, Kossuth had learned both Magyar and German from his parents, had picked up the Slovak tongue from the village children, and had studied Latin at school. His linguistic talents made him a first-class public speaker, and the tall, handsome youth, with his blue eyes and chestnut hair, spoilt by his masters and fellow-students, was not a little vain of his unusual abilities and his striking appearance. From the Calvinist college of Sárospatak he proceeded to Budapest. Returning to his paternal home, he drew attention to himself by his behaviour during the disturbances at the time of the cholera epidemic, when the superstitious peasantry, maddened by their dread of the disease, had turned against the townsfolk and the nobles, whom they blamed for the outbreak. Kossuth pacified the savage mob by the sheer power of words.

Not far from his father's, in the solitude of a mediaeval castle, standing on one of the vast Andrassy estates, lived the Countess Etelka Andrassy, while the Count himself spent most of his time in Vienna. To her, who was ten years his senior, the handsome young lawyer was introduced by mutual friends, and a sentimental idyll resulted, perhaps not entirely on platonic lines.

She polished his manners, taught the gifted youth to become a man of the world, and coached him in every respect.

Count Andrassy's friends and relatives did their best to separate the two lovers, they even accused Kossuth, an ardent card player, of embezzlement, but Etelka, who felt that the moment had come to launch her friend on a public career, started him in life as a political journalist, with the assistance of influential connections. The new publicist, however, soon turned from his harmless Parliamentary reports to a different sphere of activity.

He had seen how the "good old Emperor Francis" and his camarilla threw their opponents into the Spielberg prison, in Moravia, whence they emerged broken in body and soul, many became insane, or died in prison. Serfdom was abolished only nominally in the monarchy and people were still living in the Middle Ages. In consequence of his violent criticism of such matters, Kossuth himself was arrested in 1837 on a charge of high treason. After a year's confinement in the prison of Ofen he was tried and sentenced to a further four years' imprisonment. In his prison cell he learnt English from an antiquated grammar, and perfected himself in the language of his ideal hero, George Washington, by reading the English Bible and Shakespeare and the works of English writers on political economy.

Released under a general amnesty which was wrested from Metternich by the Hungarian Diet in May 1840, he devoted his time to initiating a "Buy Hungarian" movement, and popularising Magyar fashions, as a patriotic method of distinguishing the Hungarian people from the other components of the Habsburg Empire. Kossuth's final aim, however, was separation from Austria.

A campaign in favour of a Polish Magyar friendship which sprang up at this time received only his half-hearted support, for he was too essentially a liberal and a democrat to look with favour on the ideas which had prompted this mutual approach, namely, the totalitarian and ultra chauvinistic notions which had so strong an appeal for both nations.

When in 1847 a Constitution was demanded by Hungary, Kossuth had already been elected to the Diet, and as the repercussions of the new French Revolution were soon to reach the Danubian Basin, where the atmosphere was already electric, the

ground was well prepared for the historic speech on March 3, 1848, in which he bade Hungary to resort to open revolt.

This address was the signal for a general rising in all parts of the Austrian Empire. Ten days later Vienna was in full insurrection; barricades were built, and the population took up arms in order to enforce radical changes. Even Ferdinand "the Good" stopped smiling; he was compelled to give way, dismissing Metternich, who fled to England; for the State, which he had always considered before the people, could not or was unwilling to protect him.

Clemens Wenzel Lothar Metternich-Winneburg, as his full name runs, owed his position as the most powerful statesman of his day to his great social gifts, his charm of manner, and above all to his talent for *finesse*, that genius for intrigue which so often enabled this wizard of international politics to attain his ends. He was one of the most abused and most lauded men of his time, but often enough he was only a scapegoat for the misdeeds of his Emperors, and especially for those of Francis I, whose aggressive reactionary policy was strongly opposed by Metternich, who was much more liberal at heart than his contemporaries believed.

Now that Ferdinand, or rather the wire-pullers behind him, were compelled to grant Hungarian autonomy, they made the best of a bad job by ceremoniously receiving the new government, with Count Batthyány at its head, in the Vienna Hofburg. Of this government Kossuth was a member.

The Imperial city gave these Magyars a frantic reception, both the Strausses playing a very active part in all the festivities, although they were on different sides in politics. While Johann, the father, who was loyal to the Crown, composed the most beautiful military music for the Austrian Army, including the world-famous Radetzky March, Johann, the son, wrote wild, revolutionary waltzes, which were received with enthusiasm by the rebels and the people.

Marching and shouting, waltzing and singing, the jovial, *gemütlich* folk of the Danubian Empire turned one of the most blood-stained pages of European history. Consistently with the national tradition, the opening words were spoken from a coffee-house!

Standing on one of the marble-topped tables in front of the Budapest "*Grand Café Pilvax*," Alexander Petöfi recited his immortal revolutionary hymn: "Magyars arise!"

A son of a butcher and tavern-keeper of Kis Körös, whose real name was Petrovics—he had adopted the pseudonym of Petöfi when he ran away from home at the age of sixteen, to join a company of actors—Petöfi became the poet of the Magyar *puszta*, and was enthusiastically acclaimed by Heinrich Heine as the finest lyric poet of all ages. The points of similarity between Petöfi and Robert Burns are very striking. Each was born when his native

country was passing through its most prosaic age; each knew the most sordid poverty, and each was treated grudgingly by fate. Both poets were depreciated as vulgar rhymesters by the *Philistines*; their careers were meteoric in their brilliance, and their lives brief. The Magyar poet wrote over a thousand poems, two dramas, several volumes of popular tales and descriptions of travel, a comprehensive Shakespearean monograph. Love of women, love of country; love of liberty, for which he fell a few months later, at the age of twenty-six, was also only an ideal; he was fated never to enjoy it. Trampled to death in a cavalry charge, his body was never identified, and it was long before the peasants of the Magyar steppe gave up hope of seeing the living poet return one day.

The Emperor Leopold had given his pledge, and the liberation of Hungary became a fact. But not all the newly-liberated Hungarians wished to see their neighbours enjoying the same freedom as themselves. Two days after the promulgation of the new Constitution, the merchants of Pest, who were mostly of Germanic extraction, and convinced of their own superiority, determined that it would not be wise to allow their Jewish competitors to share the blessings of liberty.

The Jews were then still crowded together in the narrow old streets of the sixth and seventh wards of the city.

As an animal which has been born and kept for many years behind iron bars will not at once shake off the sense of confinement, but will stop automatically after walking a few paces, even though the grated door has long been removed, so the Jews could not give up the habit of clustering together, even when the laws which confined them within certain enclosures had long been abolished.

This subconscious urge was reinforced by the natural preference, not especially typical of the Jews, but common to all people, for living in the company of their own kin. This gregarious impulse, born perhaps in the days when the family, and later the tribe, foregathered at the first sign of impending danger, drawn together by a self-protective instinct, like so many sheep, was naturally enough strongly developed in a people for whom, through many centuries, every step beyond the Ghetto walls was attended by mortal peril.

But "Chinatowns," Italian and Negro quarters, white settlements in exotic lands, and even the hotels frequented exclusively by the English on the French Riviera, represent a similar nationalistic grouping within an alien community. The city itself is a form of human habitation born of fear and the instinct of self-defence; a form of habitation having a long ancestry, beginning with the fortified cavern-entrance, including the kraal, the lake-dwelling,

the mediæval stronghold, the walled town, and ending in the modern metropolis.

Congregating like others round their places of worship, the Israelites were also compelled by their religious laws to live in a neighbourhood where foodstuffs prepared in a ritual manner could be obtained.

This need resulted in an assemblage of Jewish tradesmen; a concentration for economic reasons not unknown to our enlightened West, where streets of doctors, tailors, and milliners may be seen in evidence of the magnetic power of business interests, which will draw people of one trade into the same district.

The voluntary Ghettos of Pest were an easy target for intolerant competitors, since all the able-bodied Jewish men, who had enthusiastically joined the newly-formed National Guard, were away from home, so that the women and children, and the aged and infirm, were at the mercy of their fellow-citizens.

On this helpless community a surprise attack was made, and a veritable pogrom resulted, which ended only when Kossuth ordered out the troops. He realised at once that hidden within this Trojan horse of Antisemitism were the forces of reaction, who, while using the Jews as a pretext, were in reality aiming at Hungary and liberty.

New measures taken by the Crown soon proved the justice of his suspicion.

Jellacic, the recently-appointed governor of Croatia, began to agitate against the Pest government, instigating a revolution in his own province, an operation facilitated by the increasing chauvinism of the Magyars, and especially by Kossuth's attempt to impose the Hungarian language, which had been bitterly opposed by the Slavs, the Rumanians, the Transylvanian Saxons, and other national minorities.

The Emperor Ferdinand, taking the great anti-Magyar insurrection as an excuse for deliberately breaking his promise, and advised by Jellacic to crush the German and Hungarian revolutions with the aid of the Slavs, who were equally hostile to both, now declared that he considered himself bound no longer by his royal word. As this declaration evoked a violent reaction on the part of the Kossuth government, which proceeded to take measures against Austria, including the formation of an independent Magyar army, the feeble Habsburg again changed his mind, reaffirming his former vow, and hoping that he would now be able to employ the Hungarians to crush the revolt in Vienna.

The Archduchess Sophia, more far-seeing than her irresolute brother-in-law, and knowing what to expect from Pest, now took a hand in the matter, and forced the Emperor, pledge or no pledge, to give Jellacic full powers to march against Hungary.

The preferential treatment of Croats, who were chosen by the Crown for the purpose of oppressing another imperial province, went to the head of the Slavs, and a hydra of minority revolutions resulted.

Open rioting broke out first in Prague, where the wife of Prince Windischgrätz, who commanded the local garrison, was shot dead by the mob. Next the Serbs, Slovaks, and Ruthenians entered upon their own campaigns of liberation, and encouraged by their success, other nationalities began to revolt. The Transylvanian Saxons, who received moral and financial support from Germany, the Wallachs in the East, the Tyrolese in the West, and the Italians in the Southern regions of the Empire, all began to rise in rebellion.

When the disturbances were quashed in one district, revolt raised its head in another. Like a forest or prairie fire, when the treacherous flames creep along the ground, and the sparks fly wildly through the air, starting a blaze miles away and spreading irresistible destruction, these outbreaks leapt from province to province.

It was no longer enough to "make an example", the exasperated populace refused to learn its lesson, and the authorities had to employ stronger and stronger forces as whole districts rose against the Crown.

The orders to fire, the commands to charge, were given in German, the language of the Habsburg army, but at heart the conscript peasant boys, in their picturesque Hussar uniforms, might be Hungarian, the Uhlans Polish, the Dragoons Moravian, they understood only a few words of German, and like so many performing monkeys, at the sound of the master's voice they did their duty automatically. Moreover, the lads of the *puzla* had few scruples about attacking a Czech mob, just as the Tyrolean rifles, garrisoned in Croatia, and the Czech regiments stationed in Pest, fired salutes at the hostile populace without sentimental hesitation.

The officers? They, especially the younger ones, were quiet, pleasant fellows, interested in the arts, literature, and the theatre, writing affectionate letters to their girls, or playing chess, dominoes, and cards in the coffee houses, a little worried towards the end of the month by financial stringency, but leaving politics, as was proper in a soldier, strictly alone.

Now, as orders were orders, they had to play their parts in this ugly business, and they went into action as they went to a church parade, Johann the batman having burnished their buttons and laid out a fresh pair of white gloves. A few rebels were shot, or if one was in the cavalry a few screaming civilians were trampled under the horses' hooves. Johann subsequently removing the stains of action from uniform and sabre.

Well, it was not too pleasant, it was less heroic than a regular

battle; but it had to be done. There were comments and excuses in the officers' mess. . . . "There was nothing for it . . . they threw stones at the band when it struck up Haydn's 'Emperor' hymn . . . they wanted to tear down the black and yellow colours . . . they had some red, white and green rags of their own . . . after all, one has to show this rabble. . . ."

But all this was of no avail. On May 15 a second revolt broke out in Vienna, rebellion flared up in Cracow, and was followed by a renewed outbreak in Prague; all of which were crushed only by the most brutal use of force.

"Kind" Ferdinand felt uncomfortable in his yellow palace of Schönbrunn. He ordered a carriage one day for a short outing; but he drove on to Innsbruck, and did not return until late in the autumn.

Serfdom was abolished in Austria, and other reforms were introduced in order to pacify the people; without much result, however—as Kossuth proclaimed himself dictator of Hungary a third riot occurred in Vienna, which was checked only when Windischgrätz stormed the city.

This rising of 1848 was the dress rehearsal for the great explosion which finally, seventy years later, blew Austria-Hungary to pieces; and the visionary mind of Stephen Széchenyi, who divined the tragedy soon to involve his homeland, became deranged. He attempted to commit suicide by throwing himself from the Pest Suspension Bridge, but was overpowered and taken to the Döbling asylum, where Lenau, the mad poet, lived in an adjoining room. There, after twelve years' confinement, Széchenyi ended his sufferings by shooting himself.

If ever a man deserved from his nation the title of her greatest son, it was this Tory, who had introduced the noblest form of liberalism.

Ferdinand's advisers realised that matters could not any longer be left to drift if a general catastrophe were to be averted, and they proposed the abdication of the feeble-minded Emperor in favour of a younger and more energetic ruler. The Archduchess Sophia, setting aside her personal ambition to become Empress herself, knowing that her husband Charles was as unfit to rule as his brother Ferdinand, persuaded the Court circles to accept their son Francis Joseph. She was convinced that the Archduke had not inherited the perilous mental instability of his mother's family, the Wittelsbachs, nor that of the Habsburgs, but was healthy in body and mind.

The Emperor Ferdinand abdicated in December, and his eighteen-year old nephew was raised to the throne, which stood at that moment on a very shaky foundation.

While Radetzky was still employed in restoring the situation in Italy, and Windischgraetz had his hands full at home, Jellacic, unaided, was unable to cope with the Hungarian insurgents, suffering a series of defeats.

Francis Joseph, urged by his resolute mother, appointed a new general in place of the unsuccessful Croat commander, in the person of Haynau, an illegitimate son of the Prince Elector of Hessen-Cassel, famous for his bestial cruelty in the Italian campaign, when he became known, not without cause, as the "woman-flogger of Brescia."

At the same time the new Emperor turned for help to Czar Nicholas of Russia, whom he met in Warsaw.

Not only was Nicholas bound by the Holy Alliance, but he had promised, at the deathbed of Francis I, to come to the assistance of the latter's epileptic offspring should need arise. Now he was ready to extend the fulfilment of his vow to the grandson, Francis Joseph, to say nothing of the fact that he had long been looking for a pretext for extinguishing the flames of revolution which were blazing in the neighbouring State, and threatening his own realm. As "it so happened" that he had several hundred thousand soldiers on the Austrian frontier, it was not difficult for the Czar to accede to his ally's desire, and before long his army was ordered to march against Hungary, which had in the meantime been proclaimed an independent Republic.

Kossuth, realising his country's mortal peril, issued a manifesto to the people of Europe, and appealed to the liberal nations. But neither France nor Britain responded.

The Austrians under Haynau, with the Russians under General Paskievits, entered Buda, and on July 11 the Cossacks rode over the just completed suspension bridge, which should have become a symbol of a new, free Hungary. The last battle of the war of Magyar liberation was lost when the patriot army, under the command of Gorgey, capitulated at Világos to the Russian general Rudiger, and Haynau began to deal with the situation in his own ruthless way.

On October 6, 1849, the first anniversary of the death of Count Latour, whom the cheerful Viennese had hung from a lamp post, Haynau, who in the meantime had been christened "General Hyena" by the *vox populi*, had thirteen Hungarian army-leaders executed at Arad. On the same day, to conceal the fact that the Magyar premier, Batthyany, had escaped justice by cutting his own throat in prison, the corpse, bound to a post, was publicly "executed" in Pest by a firing-squad. The savage cruelty of the Austrian commander and his masters can be best measured by the fact that during the first two weeks following the Arad massacre Haynau

signed over three hundred death sentences, commuted, in a very few cases, to penal servitude for life by the clemency of the young Emperor.

The General had a special rod in pickle for the Jews of Pest and Old Ofen, to punish them for their participation in and sympathy with the insurrection. They were ordered to deliver, without any consideration, within six months, complete uniform and equipment, including underwear, boots, etc., for forty-eight thousand men. A petition addressed to Francis Joseph resulted in the reduction of this fine to two million three hundred thousand gulden in hard cash—approximately one hundred thousand pounds sterling.

Owing to the heavy burdens imposed upon individual citizens, things were not too cheerful in Herr Carl Steiner's cap-maker's establishment. The staff had to be reduced, and my grandfather, whose ambition it was to become a real furrier or skin-merchant, and who was no longer satisfied with making lambskin caps for peasants, gave notice and left the workshop.

He first took a job in Debreczen, a village metropolis situated in the heart of the endless Magyar *puszta*. In the days when Max Weiss worked there the town, for all its very large population, had not a single house with a second floor. Drove of horses and herds of cattle were driven through the streets, and the peasant manners of the citizens did not suggest that it was to become, in the near future, one of Hungary's great commercial centres, and a seat of learning.

From Debreczen he wandered to Nagy-Várad, soon returning, however, to Pest, where his ambition to live in the capital and become a furrier was achieved when he obtained employment by a well-known firm.

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In spite of Haynau's effort to wipe out all those who had instigated and participated in the Hungarian revolution, many of the republicans escaped into neighbouring countries, and especially into Turkish territory.

Louis Kossuth, accompanied by some thousands of his men, after burying the crown of St. Stephen, which he had brought from Buda, in Magyar soil, crossed the frontier at Orsova, entering the Sultan's state, where asylum on a most generous scale was offered to the refugees. But as they did not feel safe so near the Habsburg sphere of influence, and as several unsuccessful attempts to assassinate Kossuth made his further stay inadvisable, the leader accepted the invitation of friends to visit the United States.

Kossuth's journey to America became a triu . . .

for the heroes of the lost war, and a proof that the western peoples were not in sympathy with their rulers, who had turned a deaf ear to the Magyar call for help.

When the S.S. *Mississippi*, with the Hungarian patriots on board, entered the harbour of Marseilles the French authorities refused to allow them to land. But the people of Marseilles could row or sail out to her, and they did so in their thousands, their ovations proving what they thought of their own government.

There were similar scenes of wild enthusiasm in every port at which the *Mississippi* touched, and one could hardly describe Kossuth's arrival in Southampton, where he interrupted his voyage to pay homage to Britain, without laying oneself open to the charge of exaggeration, even if one were merely to quote the reports in the press.

These newspaper reports read like fairy-tales, if one reflects that the British people are described as cold and xenophobic by other nations, and very often by themselves. Southampton looked, on this fine morning of October 23, 1851, not like a city expecting the arrival of a defeated and alien rebel, but rather welcoming one of its own greatest sons, who had conquered half a world or something equally sensational. Hundreds of thousands of spectators had collected to obtain a glimpse of this foreign refugee, many arriving in special trains from all parts of Britain.

When the *Mississippi* came into view, the bells of Southampton began to ring, guns were fired, and as soon as the tall figure of Kossuth could be recognised, standing amidst his family and friends, a tremendous cheer went up to welcome him, which did not abate until the guests had entered their carriages and driven away. These carriages, decked with the Hungarian colours and coat of arms, could proceed only at a walking-pace through the dense crowd.

As soon as the procession arrived in front of the town hall a number of working-men rushed forward, lifting Kossuth out of the carriage and carrying him on their shoulders into the building. For these simple labourers he was the embodiment of the spirit of freedom and equality, the creator of a new democratic brotherhood, which would bring deliverance from oppression.

All the speeches at the official reception were conceived in a similar spirit. They expressed the joy of the British nation on seeing in their midst the hero of the war of liberation, who had escaped the executioner, and the hope that his journey would be propitious, bringing him nearer to the goal of Hungarian emancipation.

A letter was handed to Kossuth in which Lord Palmerston invited him and his family to stay in the house of the Foreign

Secretary, and as similar invitations began to arrive from all sides, including three hundred from town councils, Kossuth had to extend his visit to several weeks.

Banquets, garden parties, festivities followed in endless succession. People came from far away to meet Kossuth before he arrived in their own town, or to hear him once again. All were impressed by his outstanding gifts as an orator, and the amazing way in which he had mastered the English language, his knowledge of which was acquired only from books.

During his stay in London, Cobden, whose works he had studied in prison, called upon him; as did the United States Minister, to convey the President's greetings, and to tell him how impatiently one and all in America awaited the arrival of Hungary's greatest son.

The Viennese Court was greatly perturbed by these events. It was well known to the Habsburgs and their reactionary colleagues, that London had become a haven for political refugees, where men like Mazzini, Freiligrath, and Karl Marx, were at work in the midst of forty thousand revolutionary foreigners, the majority of whom were Germans; but Kossuth's triumph seemed a little too much for them.

The Austrian Ambassador even made representations to Lord Palmerston; however, he was no more responsive than he had been during the "Haynau scandal," when the General, who had come to England on an official visit, had been ignored by the Foreign Secretary. Failing in his mission, the Baron remained for his own amusement, and on one of his sightseeing tours he visited Barclay's Brewery, where it suddenly appeared that the workers were taking a curious interest in him. They crowded round Haynau, and finally amidst cries of "That's for Arad!" gave him such a severe thrashing that he had to be taken to hospital, and soon all London knew how Barclay's draymen had avenged in their own way the martyrs of the Hungarian revolution.

It was about this time that England had another important Austrian visitor. Metternich, the retired Chancellor, lived almost unnoticed in a house in Eaton Square, and then for some months near Brighton. The excitement aroused by Kossuth's visit left the old gentleman unmoved; he was no longer interested in the game of politics. Wandering quietly about in the museums, picture galleries and reading-rooms of the Capital, Clemens Wenzel Lothar Metternich looked very much like other intellectuals, and the uninitiated observer would hardly have suspected the diplomatist and king-maker. . . .

Kossuth, tired out, left his children in the care of English friends, and sailed at last with his wife for New York. Their sojourn of

more than eight months in the United States was attended by social manifestations which, if that were possible, outdid their English welcome. The Hungarian colony was beside itself with joy on beholding the hero of the wars of liberation in their midst, and Kossuth was almost torn to pieces by people fighting to get near him, or to offer the great man their hospitality.

Quite ill with fatigue, and longing for their children, the Kossuths returned to London, where they remained for more than eight years.

Events, as a rule, soon lose their topical value, the sensational impression made by distinguished visitors quickly evaporates, and even justified admiration is often enough short lived. But Kossuth was not one of the mayflies of public enthusiasm, he remained in the limelight of popular interest throughout his residence in Britain.

The newspapers never wearied of recording his numerous public appearances, his articles were rarely declined by editors, and his lectures were delivered to packed audiences. The provincial, no less than the metropolitan press, kept its readers well informed of the movements of this political luminary. The *Ayr Advertiser*, in December 1856, had a full page report of the great man's visit to Kilmarnock, where he paid homage to the shrine of Burns, and where over twenty thousand people received him, and we read that the net profit of £42 was shown after an assembly to hear Kossuth in the Ayr Presbyterian Hall. These are examples picked at random, showing the astonishing fact that in the fifth year of Kossuth's stay in Britain his personality had lost none of its fascination, and when he finally left for Italy, in search of a kinder climate, all saw him depart with the greatest regret.

But this epilogue of the Hungarian Revolution has tempted me to anticipate, to break away from the normal succession of events, and we have now to return to the Danubian basin. There the turbulent waves were slowly abating, affairs were again becoming uneventful, politics receded into the background, and the little tragedies of daily life, family troubles and business cares regained their usual importance.

In 1850 my great grandfather died, and his tombstone, at his own request, was inscribed with the old name "Wolf Mattersdorf, son of Jetty." The ritual prayers were said, and the Old Ofen graveyard lay quiet and lonely as ever. My grandfather had now to support his mother, and as an opportunity came his way to work as a salesman in a skin merchant's business, he resigned his post with the furrier. This brought Max Weiss a step nearer to his final aim, to become a fur-dealer on his own account.

CHAPTER VIII

1866 AND ALL THAT

BUSINESS had improved considerably. The Vienna-Pest railway had just been opened, a visit to the Imperial Capital, or the triple city of Budapest, was less an adventure than in the days when *Betyars* endangered the royal mail and threatened the Bauern-post. Life was becoming less romantic, and even the young Emperor availed himself of this new means of transport, when, accompanied by the Prussian envoy, Otto von Bismarck, he made his first appearance in Pest. Francis Joseph thought the steam-engine had brought the peoples a little nearer to each other; and he wanted not only to show this stiff, tall, reserved Prussian gentleman the beauties of his Hungarian province, but at the same time to convince him, and through him the German people, of his own popularity in the Magyar citadel. The Hungarians, however, did little to manifest their love and admiration of the youthful monarch, whose position was extremely difficult. Wherever the strains of Haydn's "Emperor" hymn, or the hoisting of the black and yellow Habsburg-standard indicated his arrival, all faces turned to stone, all eyes were cold and full of hatred.

Lady," who haunted the Hofburg, or some other of its ghosts? Francis Joseph soon learned that the spectre haunting his mother and disturbing the peace of the Court was named *mésalliance*—the *bête noire* of the Habsburgs. Emperor Franzl was so good-looking . . . there were whispered stories already . . . and he was, after all, so inexperienced. . . .

Sophia was a Bavarian princess by birth, her sister Ludovica, the wife of Duke Maximilian Joseph, had several daughters, and even though the Court physicians were not in favour of next-of-kin marriages, especially in the case of the Wittelsbachs, were not the latter an ancient and distinguished family? Why make a present of the crown of Austria to a stranger?

A meeting was arranged at Ischl, and the young Emperor fell head over ears in love; not as his mother and aunt had anticipated, with the elder cousin, but with Elizabeth, her younger sister.

She was merely a child, not quite sixteen; she had never seen anything of the world beyond Possenhofen, the simple country seat of her parents; she had lived in a semi-aristocratic, semi-bourgeois atmosphere; the household servants were modest, friendly peasant boys and girls; everything was informal and cheerful, as Daddy hated all fuss . . . and now? To leave her country home for the most resplendent court in Europe; to become the Empress of a great realm; to change the gay Bavarian colours, blue like the sky above, white as the mountain snow, for the sombre Habsburg black and yellow! To be greeted not by cow-bells and the shepherds' flutes, but by the "Gottesgarde" played by military brass bands, the "present arms!" of the Imperial Guard. . . . It was overwhelming!

Vienna gave Elizabeth a wonderful reception; and the heart of the emotional populace went out to the nervous, diffident child, sitting in her huge golden chaise, a real fairy princess in her youthful radiance, adorned with a regal crown of tresses more beautiful than any diadem of gems could be, driving through forests of flowers, beneath endless garlands of roses, towards the Hofburg.

Francis Joseph was overjoyed; he felt that now the ice had been broken between him and his people, and that this April 24, 1854, was to be the turning-point in their mutual relations. An amnesty freed thousands of those who were still in jail; the Crownlands and the nationalities must share in their Emperor's happiness.

But he was soon to discover that in fact nothing had changed, that his assumption that the old scores were settled was delusion. The people's love was only for his young wife, and if they now smiled at his approach they did so for her sake alone.

The Archduchess Sophia knew this only too well, and her heart grew hot with jealousy, the fear lest she should lose her son's love

and play second fiddle to this "green country girl." She would teach her a lesson!

The shy, reserved young Empress was soon to learn who was the real head of the House of Habsburg. Her mother-in-law, assisted by the Court ceremonial, that inexorable horror, which hides its cruelty behind a tinsel façade, made Elizabeth's life a burden.

She, who had grown to young womanhood in Possenhofen, whose very name, the "Court of Pranks," was suggestive of its free and easy nature, now felt that a wall of steel and ice, the Spanish etiquette, sundered her from those who were called subjects by her new family, and the stone-faced lackeys who waited upon them, because they were not privileged to wear the Golden Fleece, and were therefore regarded as untouchables by this inner circle, petrified in its conceit.

When Elizabeth turned to Francis Joseph for help she found him too weak to protect her against the energetic Archduchess, and it was not long before the husband and wife went their separate ways, especially after the children were born, and the Empress was forbidden to bring them up in her own way.

The Emperor was not bad at heart; he loved her dearly, but the lover was a pedant with an exaggerated sense of duty. Unimaginative by nature, in his matter-of-fact sobriety, his dry-as-dust vacuity, his love of uniforms and conventional correctness, Francis Joseph was the very antithesis of the Empress. Sensitive, artistic, complex in her simplicity, excessively shy, so that she dreaded public appearances, with a mind always full of fantastic and poetical ideas, she was ill at ease in the Emperor's company, and was hated by the intriguing Court, which was ruled by Sophia.

When Francis Joseph realised this, and perceived the cold indifference, the unchanging animosity displayed by his subjects, he retired more and more behind the mask of the *Divus Caesar*.

In 1857 the Imperial family made its first appearance in Hungary. Elizabeth's reception by the impulsive Magyars was beyond the power of words to describe, eclipsing even the enthusiastic welcome of the Viennese.

It was a case at love at first sight, and the adoration shown by this high-spirited people was completely reciprocated by the Empress, who from that hour gave all her heart to Hungary.

But as always in Francis Joseph's and Elizabeth's life, their joy was suddenly interrupted; the younger baby princess fell ill; the elder one, little Sophia, contracted the same disease, and died, barely two years of age, only two days later.

Flags were lowered to half-mast; the festal garlands disappeared, the stricken family returned to Schönbrunn. Yet, within a year

the cities were again illuminated, the streets were adorned with streamers; everywhere there was music and rejoicing for a Crown Prince was born: Rudolph.

The years came and went; flags and festal garlands were replaced by sable, and this again by fluttering flags of welcome. Such was the Habsburgs' life; not greatly different from that of others.

My grandfather, in 1838, married an Old Ofen girl, Henrietta, who was just sixteen; the fashionable age for brides, it seems, not only in Court circles.

These were difficult times. Dr. Alexander Bach's bureaucratic régime imposed heavy burdens on the Crownlands, nipping in the bud growing friendship between the monarch and his Hungarian subjects. Still, when the Prince Palatine Albrecht retired and was replaced by General Benedek, a Hungarian and a Protestant, this was taken to be a friendly gesture to the Magyars, who were restive under alien police and bureaucracy. The General, however, had soon to leave Hungary, for there was serious trouble in Italy; the Austrian army had been badly defeated at Solferino; Benedek might be in time to restore the situation. But no, it was too late, and Lombardy was lost.

The war in the south did not greatly affect Pest; there everything was normal, and a daughter was born in Max Weiss's modest flat. A year later another girl arrived, and then, on April 19, 1862, a son, named William by the proud parents, who became my father.

Francis Joseph experimented, changed his cabinet ministers, and altered the Constitution. But possessing neither the qualities of Maria Theresa nor those of Joseph II, he was always afraid of the final consequences of his actions, and only too often took the advice of his mother and her counsellors. He was only a pseudo-autocrat, with a wavering domestic policy. The wires were generally pulled by Cardinal Archbishop Rauscher and Count Grünne, excepting only in foreign affairs; there the Emperor allowed no one to interfere, and in this sphere all decisions were solely his own.

In alliance with Prussia, Francis Joseph waged war against Denmark, and with Prussia took joint possession of Schleswig-Holstein. But the common booty soon gave rise to mutual jealousy; the old fight for German hegemony was resumed, and when King Wilhelm, who in the meantime had concluded a defensive pact with Italy, marched into Schleswig and occupied the province, Austria mobilised.

On June 25, 1866, Prussian troops crossed into Bohemia, and a week later the Habsburg armies, decisively defeated, laid down their arms at Königgrätz. Nothing alters this fact, not even Archduke Albrecht's victory against the Italians, fighting as Prussia's allies on Austria's southern front.

Albrecht had taken over this command only at the last minute from Benedek, whom Francis Joseph had sent against Prussia, in spite of the General's vigorous protest. One could not run the risk of letting a Habsburg lose a battle; let the Archduke take command in the less dangerous campaign, while this Hungarian and Protestant, who professed to be a specialist in Italian warfare, and to be familiar with every inch of the territory involved, while he knew very little of Bohemia, went forward to his certain ruin. Orders are orders . . . and a scapegoat was needed.

The Benedek affair was one of the darkest spots in the history of the Habsburgs, a nasty, cold-blooded political murder; for even if the victim remained alive in body, an honourable soldier's soul was killed.

It was a very short war, a veritable Blitzkrieg, prefaced by Bismarck's masterly diplomatic prelude, and ending in a political finale performed by the same artist with no less virtuosity.

While the year 1066 paved the way for the beginning of Britain's expansion, the year 1866 marked the end of Austria as a great power. Her defeat made her withdraw into the world of her own affairs as a snail withdraws into its shell, and henceforth the ambassadors of the Viennese Court were the representatives of cultured people rather than of a mighty Empire.

The catastrophic defeat of the enemy was a spur to Prussian arrogance, and Königgrätz not only sowed the seed of the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, it was also the prelude to the terrible game of "revanche," and in that respect was responsible for the succession of tragedies soon to befall the world.

Austria was not defeated merely by the needle-gun against the muzzle-loader; in this case the German schoolmaster gave the knock-out blow to a people artificially stupefied by its rulers and clergy.

The Austrian government, popularly described as "three Counts plus a lunatic," which was then in office, and which picked its members only from the highest circles of the aristocracy, including the notoriously insane Esterházy, was no match for a Bismarck-Roon-Moltke triumvirate.

Otto von Bismarck, born, as was Frederick the Great, in the barren, sandy March of Brandenburg, set the boorish "German Michael" firmly in the saddle. The Chancellor, who carried the Bible wherever he went, and had no artistic inclinations, nor any real understanding of strategy, contrasted strongly with "Old Fritz" in these and many other respects. Frederick, a freethinker, the intimate friend of Voltaire the atheist, was surrounded by artists and scientists during his earlier career, and by parrots, dogs, and monkeys in his latter years, while he beat good military drill

into the bones of his slavish subjects. But in spite of their diversities, they were both proud to be the most hated men of their age, they made unpopularity a German virtue, and created the Teutonic morality, according to which pledges, contracts, pacts, agreements, alliances, are only empty words, shreds of parchment, scraps of paper.

Frederick and Bismarck alike sold their souls to the devil in their greed for glory, and died of the same poison, disappointment, contempt for humanity, disdain of their race. By uniting a rabble of small states, and by drumming the theory of "blood and iron" into the heads of parvenu weaklings, they created the great robber empire which became the curse of mankind.

Every good German, every imitation German, has tried to copy "Old Fritz" and the "Iron Chancellor." At home, dominated by their constantly nagging wives—women of the type who grow into the mother-in-law of the music halls—they have little to say, though they do their best to bully their wives and their children. But out of doors where the inferiority complex makes the German always afraid that he is being laughed at, or that his collar is dirty, or his trousers are insufficiently braced, their mental frustrations and inhibitions are compensated by a conviction of superiority, a pathological exhibitionism, especially flagrant whenever they forgather in hordes.

Their one aim and happiness in life is to domineer over others, to order everybody about, to make themselves feared, to feel that they are the *Herrenvolk*, the master race.

The uniformed student corps, the intellectuals who slash one another's faces with sabres like savages, the sergeant major bearing, the beerhouse atmosphere in business and recreation, the mania for discipline, for regimenting all men and all things, are only parts of the game.

Germans look down on other peoples from an artificial height, a vast mountain of conceit, vulgarity, false sentimentality, ostentation, and brutality, which nevertheless contains much excellent material, diligence, accuracy, strictness and punctuality. Heroes in the mass, cowards individually, with no feeling for the underdog, no understanding of fair play, they cleverly exploit the brains of the geniuses who appear among them as intellectual sports, to be treated as scientific slaves, who help to camouflage the strange Jekyll and Hyde characteristics of the German people—a people half modern, half prehistoric and barbarian.

A real Berliner has the greatest contempt for the people of Austria, who speak his own language with such a "funny" dialect, and are so childishly gay, so jovial and nonchalant, even their Spanish Court ceremonial, so greatly envied and sedulously

copied by the Hohenzollerns, having this peculiar and *gemütlich* undertone.

How amusing they find these Viennese!—People for whom a Francis is “Franzl,” an Ignatz “Natzy,” a Joseph “Peperl”; their idiom is full of such quaint diminutives! Yet somehow these Poldys, Franzls and Peperls reveal, in their quiet way, the conviction of mental superiority; the knowledge that their literature, their theatre, their cultural life are nothing to laugh at; and even their cooking . . . well, there may be something in it when the Viennese contemptuously addresses the tasty German fruit jelly with the words: “Don’t tremble, don’t be afraid, I won’t eat you!”

However this may be, it seemed to the Prussians a very good thing that Austria was beaten, and shown just where she got off; while the Austrian nationalists themselves were filled with malicious delight by the Habsburgs’ troubles. This curious feeling can perhaps be elucidated by citing an old Mattersdorf proverb: “Serves the bed-bugs right, the house is on fire!” After all, what did it matter that the whole Empire was endangered, so long as the rulers suffered?

Francis Joseph, clearly realising that he must now set his house in order, and wisely advised by the Empress Elizabeth, turned first to Hungary.

This country had remained loyal to the crown, in spite of all attempts, on the part of Italy and Prussia, to resuscitate the revolution during the difficult days of the ill-fated war, and was even now willing to make her peace with the Habsburgs.

Elizabeth was well informed, in respect of Magyar affairs, by Francis Deák and Max Falk, who always kept her knowledge of them up to date. Deák was a lawyer of very humble origin, whose cool political acumen, modesty and integrity, and the reasonable attitude which he had adopted during the revolution, made the “sage of the fatherland” as the Hungarians named him, very acceptable to the rulers. An orator of the highest order, he had the ear of the Magyars, aristocracy and commoners, and he made it plain to them that Kossuth’s separatist policy could only mean disaster for the whole Empire. Deák became the Empress’s tutor in social science, while Falk, a highly gifted Jewish journalist, taught her the Hungarian language, and introduced her to the beauties of Magyar literature, at the same time implanting liberal and democratic ideas in her receptive mind.

Although she was constantly teased by Francis Joseph for her strange choice of masters, the Empress soon convinced the Emperor that their judgment and advice were sound, and . . . ed accept them in shaping his Hungarian policy.

Deák was invited to form a new Hungarian cabinet, but he declined on the pretext of illness and advancing age, recommending Count Julius Andrassy as Prime Minister.

Julius Andrassy, a son of Kossuth's friend Etelka Szapáry, was sentenced to death by Haynau during the revolution, but since he fled to France only his effigy could be hanged. Paris and society nicknamed the very good-looking young Count, who was a great favourite with the fair sex, "le beau pendu," and gave him the time of his life, until in 1857 the Austrian government granted him permission to return to Hungary, at the same time restoring all his property.

As Premier, he pursued a very moderate policy. For the Empress Elizabeth he felt the greatest admiration, which became absolute devotion when he realised her feelings towards Hungary.

Andrassy's programme, inspired by Deák, included equal rights for the Magyars, a separate legislature, total emancipation for the Jews, and a separate Hungarian army, under the national war ministry.

Francis Joseph having accepted these points, the pact was soon concluded, and became known in Central European history as the *Ausgleich*, or the 1867 Settlement.

In the meantime the Emperor had visited the World Exhibition in Paris, at which the famous orchestra of Johann Strauss II was one of the greatest attractions, and his "Blue Danube" waltz, composed for this occasion, had a popular success which has never been surpassed by any musical composition.

Thanks to information received from one of Kossuth's adherents, now exiled in America, the crown of St. Stephen had been found near Orsova, where Kossuth had buried it. As Francis Joseph, to please the Magyars, wished to be crowned King of Hungary, he came for this occasion to Budapest, accompanied by the Empress.

The splendour of the coronation ceremonies beggared description, for magnates and people were eager to show their gratitude to Elizabeth, to whom they gave all credit for the political achievements of their government.

The Esterházys, Zichys, Batthyánys, Andrassys and their aristocratic colleagues spent millions on their preparations for the great occasion, offering to their adored Empress such a wealth and splendour of pageantry as even in pomp-loving Hungary had never before been seen.

The royal pair were overwhelmed with gifts, with which Francis Joseph endowed the institutions founded for the benefit of the veterans and orphans of the 1848 rising. At the same time he consigned to a Jewish educational fund the two million three hundred thousand gulden which the Jews had been condemned to pay.

But the curse with which this Habsburg's life was burdened chose this moment to strike. In the midst of the festivities the news arrived that Francis Joseph's brother Maximilian, left in the lurch by his French allies, who had installed him as Emperor of Mexico, had been executed in Queretaro by the republican rebels, while Carlotta, his wife, had lost her reason as a result of shock.

As always after one of fate's hammer-blows, Francis Joseph sought consolation in hard work. His cherished idea of developing Vienna into a great metropolis had received fresh impetus during his visit to Paris—a visit which he now regretted, since Napoleon III had played such a doubtful role in his brother's tragedy.

Even though Francis Joseph was without Elizabeth's artistic talents, his heartfelt patriotism, his diligence, his precision, and his good fortune in the choice of technical advisers, made Vienna one of the finest and most dignified capitals of Europe.

The Ring, a series of majestic circular boulevards, which replaced the unsightly old moats and fortifications, was entirely his own idea; nor is there anything like it elsewhere, excepting a miniature edition in Budapest.

The Emperor was greatly assisted in his work by the Austrian bourgeoisie, which under his régime had finally pushed the aristocracy aside, though not without acquiring some of its best mental qualities.

The aristocratic *jeunesse dorée*, which had played such an important part in Danubian policy since the Vienna Congress, now retired into the pleasant domain of diplomacy, the less important ministries, and the more fashionable cavalry or rifle regiments.

This is why in Austria the achievements in town-planning and other spheres of progress were due to the combined efforts of the Emperor and the bourgeoisie, including the bureaucrats, while in Hungary the situation was entirely different. There the Court had little influence, apart from the benevolent interest of the Empress, and all progressive changes came from the co-operation of the magnates, the largely Jewish middle class, and the peasantry. Magyar officialdom, recruited mostly from the petty nobility and the gentry, stood aloof, and the bureaucratic camp soon became the focus of a new reactionary movement.

The magnificent new royal palace of Buda, erected in place of the old castle, was a token of homage to Elizabeth, a veritable bouquet in stone in honour of this eccentric lady, visible from far afield, with its towers and cupolas, its huge riding-school and stables. The Magyars, an equestrian people, loved the Empress for her horsemanship, and only smiled with tolerant affection when this sport became a craze with her. The Imperial stables contained

the finest horses in Hungary, but the hazards which she ran in the hunting field, and on cross country races, the collection of paintings of horses, which she called her riding chapel, and her association with Miss Renz, the circus proprietress, from whom she received lessons in *la haute école* and in jumping, soon proved that this passion had outgrown its healthy limits. Elizabeth's feats of horsemanship, in which few were her match in Europe, were not only a terror to her family, but also often to the riders who had rashly agreed to accompany the Empress on these fearsome undertakings, and as the Magyars presented her with the most valuable presents in horses, she always found some pretext for "trying them out." One of her most faithful companions, apart from her English trainer, was Count Andrassy, *le beau pendu*.

But in spite of this comradeship, and the great interest which she took in the Count's political activities, the slander relating to the Empress's life was unfounded, even though she now lived much of the time apart from Francis Joseph and was constantly travelling, making this unhappy man's life more difficult even than it need have been.

Elizabeth came as often as possible to Budapest, where she resided in Castle Godolo, its fine forest and wide pastures affording scope for her favourite exercise, and they also helped the Empress to keep out of the public eye. Her dread of social appearance had now reached an almost pathological intensity.

When the Khedive invited Francis Joseph to the festivities connected with the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, the Empress refused to accompany him, but she gave him her loyal support during the harassing days of the Franco-Prussian War.

Francis Joseph, whose grandfather had been compelled by Napoleon to surrender the crown of the Holy Roman Empire, now saw with mixed feelings how the parvenu Hohenzollern, William I, after defeating this Bonaparte's nephew, Napoleon III, had become the Emperor of the united German nation.

The world, very naturally, took the keenest interest in these events, but no one realised that when the victors dictated their peace terms the political destiny not only of the defeated nation, but of the whole of Europe was decided for many decades to come.

This renewed victory of brute force gave rise to a far more enduring reactionary movement than had the Vienna Congress, in concluding a Holy Alliance to wage war on liberalism and constitutional ideas—an Alliance destined to be swept away by the tide of revolution in 1848.

Although an anæmic liberalism had thrust its feeble roots into the soil of Central Europe, a peculiarly malignant "social" reaction made its appearance, rising from the hotbed of national hatred



IN EISENSTADT :

STAIRS LEADING TO HAYDN'S FLAT



HIS LAST PLACE OF REST, THE "BERGKIRCHE"

[*to face p. 112.*]



"THE KING OF ROME"
NAPOLEON II

The formation of two powerful blocks, irrevocably opposed, armed to the teeth, and always ready for war, could not fail to be followed by the most disastrous results.

Europe had again fallen a victim to the cult of militarism. National competition in the invitation and manufacture of destructive weapons, and the constant increase of standing armies, resulted in an armaments' race; a state of affairs known as "armed peace," which was supposed to prevent war.

But the grim features of Mars were visible enough through this threadbare mask of pacifism, especially after militarism had grown into imperialism, and an insatiable greed for colonies, a rush for spheres of influence, a struggle for world domination by the Great Powers, prepared the ground for a calamity of a hitherto unknown magnitude.

International competition was accompanied by internal conflict. Might taking precedence of right, the "sovereign" peoples of these militarised countries forced their minorities to accept "national" language, schools, and culture, to become merged into the majority, as in former days heterodoxy had been forced into conformity with the predominant religion by the use of brutal violence.

By compelling the national minorities to take the defensive, this state of nationalism created an unhealthy super-chauvinism—the Pan-Slav, Pan-German and other movements—the situation being still further complicated by a violent struggle between capital and labour, heaping up tinder and powder for the explosion soon to follow.

While the first "reaction" had its centre in Vienna, the second had its focus in Germany, and the philosophy of the "armoured fist" adopted in consequence of the victories of 1866 and 1871 by a naturally scholarly and industrious people, acted as a constant poison upon this highly susceptible community which was taught to make the State a fetish, a bloodthirsty idol, to which all principles of humanity were sacrificed.

The worship of the ruler was replaced by adoration of the State and the absolutism of the monarchy by the absolutism of the State, which was no less inimical to progress. Everybody and everything had to sacrifice its individuality to this Baal, the "national State"; conceived as an omnipotent organism, it tolerated no rival.

It was on these lines that Bismarck, the Iron Chancellor, opened his offensive against cosmopolitan Catholicism, while other political leaders revived their "cultural" onslaught upon the "international" Jews.

But the Jews, who, after centuries of terrible hardships, had now attained equal rights, endeavoured to place themselves com · ly

at the disposal of this new order. Unwilling to be left behind in the race, in the idolisation of the great ideal of power, they became super-Germans, super-Slavonic, ultra-Magyar, ultra-Polish, according to the nationality of their hosts.

They wanted to prove worthy of the human rights which had been granted to them, but at the same time they did not fail to reap the harvest by swarming into the cities, which with the rise of capitalism exercised an increased attraction upon an enterprising people.

The world had discovered new means of becoming rich. The building trade and railway construction had assumed fantastic dimensions. A fever ran over Europe; emigration to the United States became a new source of income; countless companies were promoted; new business enterprises were founded; speculation became a mad gamble; until the frenzy of the money-flagellants, the lunacy of the stock exchanges, replacing the waltzing mania that had filled Vienna with dancing-dervishes, ended in a slump, and the whole artificial economy crashed into dust.

This famous Black Friday, May 9, 1873, which shook the Vienna and Berlin stock exchanges to the very foundations, infecting with panic all the other temples of Mammon, gave Antisemitism, all over Europe, a fresh impetus. It was not as if the Jews alone had been responsible for erecting this precarious house of cards which had just collapsed; the German Imperial House, the magnates, who had plundered the coffers of the French State, and Austrian aristocrats of historic lineage, quite forgetting their accustomed exclusiveness, had not hesitated to co-operate with commoners—whether gentile, or even oriental—in piling up the crazy structure.

But as, for thousands of years, the Jews had been the traditional scapegoats, no one scrupled to blame them and them alone for the catastrophe, and the reactionaries, ably assisted by the German Protestant Church, presently excogitated a new slogan: "the Golden International," a mythical organisation of Jewish capital, now took its place beside the already established bogies, Red and Black, of Socialism and the Catholic Church.

Department stores and big factories, hated by the small shopkeepers and traders, becoming a target for financial envy and commercial jealousy, were stigmatised as Jewish institutions, while the Liberal press, which was often owned and run by gifted journalists, not always Gentiles, who scourged economic inefficiency or exposed social evils and were thorns in the flesh of the bureaucrats, was described as maliciously destructive.

But the significant fact, especially in Austria, was that the Jews had attached themselves so strongly to certain national movements, had become so excessively Magyar, or Slavonic, or what not, that

they were actually blamed by the opposition minorities for reinforcing their enemies.

This became obvious when during a census the Hungarian Jews declared that their language was Magyar, and not, as their rulers would have preferred them to say, German; nor, as the other minorities had expected, their own tongue, Czech, Slovak, or whatever the case might be.

All these factors drove the masses into the hands of the agitators and demagogues, who wanted to introduce the methods of the Czarist pogroms into the streets of Western and Central Europe, and were supported by a Church forgetful of her own history of suffering, and of the essence of her Master's teaching.

The baser instincts, since times immemorial, have well served the usurpers of power, enabling them to distract the people's attention from their own failings; they were exploited long before a Pharaoh, who had made a mess of his agricultural policy, drove the Israelites into the Red Sea, or Nero, after a city conflagration, threw Christians to the lions.

The Trojan horse of intolerance was always one of the most effective weapons in the armoury of political throw-backs; and once again it proved most successful when employed by the "third reaction" in our own days.

Francis Joseph did not encourage Antisemitism, but with other members of the Court did his best to discourage it. His motives were not entirely idealistic, for it was neither liberalism nor any other form of intellectual or moral enlightenment that moved the Emperor to protect the Jews. His main motive was the fact that this movement had been reborn in Prussia, the Habsburgs' arch-enemy, even as an ally, and that Bismarck did not regard its instigators very critically. Further grist to the mill was afforded by a new party with Pan-German and anti-Habsburg tendencies, which was naturally abhorrent to Francis Joseph.

But the Emperor was clear-sighted enough to realise what the Jews had done in his realm for the improvement of commerce and industry, and also, in his riper years, he was no friend of violence, except when the Crown was involved.

To drop a Benedek, or to let Haynau crush rebels with terror, was quite a different matter; even that was unpleasant to remember, but this new form of brutality did violence to his feelings, which were not only influenced by Elizabeth, but had been affected by his own troubled life.

He was a genuine Austrian, a true Viennese, even if he did not share the love of chatter and small-talk, or the other popular preferences of the Viennese, but he had the veneer of kindness, so characteristic of the Austrians and the Viennese.

The Emperor held the real intelligentsia at a distance; in fact, he never met an intellectual on intimate terms, and in his younger days he often shared in the mirth evoked in the circles of the higher Court, by the association of the Prussian King, Frederick William, with Humboldt and other "silly freethinkers." Francis Joseph had no time to read anything but official documents; he never saw a newspaper, and his self-imposed "Divus Caesar" attitude prevented others from telling him the truth.

Since the death of his mother, the Archduchess Sophia, he encountered no serious opposition, and in consequence his self-confidence had grown out of all normal proportions.

In October, after a meeting with the Czar and William I, an alliance between Russia, Germany and Austria was concluded, which seemed to secure peace for awhile.

The Empress Elizabeth was off on her travels again; to Madeira, then to Greece, with brief visits to Hungary, and even briefer ones to the Vienna Burg. In the summer of 1874 she first visited England, where the people, their love of her favourite sport, and the social atmosphere, conquered her completely.

The Empress now became the chief propagandist for Britain, since Széchenyi's death, in the Danubian basin. Since she was a woman, she may not have been uninfluenced by the fact that the style of English dress suited her to perfection. She was always afraid of losing her youthful slenderness; and in the tailor-made costume, or the English riding-habit, she looked magnificent.

She set a new fashion, and split Continental society into two distinct camps: the Anglomaniacs *versus* the Francophiles.

It became quite natural for the gilded youth of the Danubian countries to have their suits "built" in Savile Row, to buy their boots, hats, and shirts in Old Bond Street, and even, as a sarcastic critic once observed, to obtain the money for these luxuries in Cork Street.

As the aristocracy set the fashion, the successful business men followed; their less wealthy colleagues imitated them; and when the slender line became the mode in Court circles the ladies also fell in love with the London fashions; English replaced French as their second language and, discarding the inevitable *gouvernante Parisienne*, they began to import English nurses and tailor-made costumes.

But the Austro-Hungarian artists did not yet share the views of the Court and the world of commerce. The Mecca for painters, sculptors and writers was still Paris, *la cité lumière*; French art was still supreme; and this preference for France was shared by the less exalted social strata of the Danubian world, whose womenfolk still aspired to play the *grande dame* rather than the "Lady," and con-

tinued to be faithful to *la mode Parisienne*, which did not necessitate the eccentric diet which the Empress was said to prescribe for herself.

Still, a gradual change was observable, and to the general regret of masculine Vienna, the little French and Swiss servant-girls who posed as "gouvernantes" in middle-class Austro-Hungarian homes, disappeared to make way for the more frigid Anglo-Saxon type; fortunately a very slow process. Perfumes, ladies' hats and evening gowns still came from Paris, and so did the first-class chefs, the naughty burlesques, and fashions in lingerie and furs.

Business had recovered from the after-effects of Black Friday; and my grandfather, who, for the last six years, had acted as a manager in a leading firm of Budapest skin-merchants, thought the moment ripe for launching his own little craft on the ocean of commerce. The Max Weiss name-plate went up on June 4, 1874, the circular letters to the fur world advertised No. 8, Elizabeth Square as the office address, and the first profits, a gulden note and a few coins, were carefully put aside as a souvenir.

When I glance through the first petty-cash book, which was kept in the careful hand of the days when there was time to write with artistry, with thin upstrokes and heavy downstrokes of the pen, I see that the initial expenses, in my grandfather's time, were not very different from those which any modern young man would have to meet on embarking on such a business venture. The sums disbursed were perhaps a little smaller, for things were a little cheaper than they are now, but the items of rent, heating, lighting, salaries, postages, and other outgoings which give us headaches worried him neither more nor less. And when I look at the household budget? Housekeeping money, school fees, doctors' bills—all those thousands of ciphers which make up the grand total, representing a human life in terms of figures—they too are very similar to our own disbursements.

One of the entries shows that he spent eleven gulden to buy a watch for the thirteenth birthday of "Willy," my father. I can imagine this timepiece, probably a bulky silver "turnip," the envy of his schoolfellows when Willy took it from his pocket—more often than was strictly necessary—to find that its hands would only crawl when he was longing for the end of a badly prepared lesson, but would race round the dial on more joyous occasions.

I think also of its sturdy ticking; of how it beat away, in line with millions of other clocks and watches, my father's life, and the lives of all those others, who were then going to and fro upon the earth, as escapements, pendulums, and calendars mark the passage of our own; keeping us in order, dividing existence into . . . and

larger fractions, ticking, turning, whirring, as the wheels revolve and the leaves of diaries turn.

It is difficult to realise the essence of an existence not one's own, to form an idea of the manner of its passing. We are often under the impression that certain people just recline in their well-cushioned armchairs, while the difficult lives of their fellow-creatures roll past them, a swollen river full of obstacles, as though merely for the diversion of these more fortunate ones. But then, again, one finds that not even a golden throne will save the person sitting on its soft upholstery from Fate's more terrible strokes, and life's most grievous complications.

My grandfather had by then two daughters and two sons. His family life was what outsiders would have called a simple one; but at least it was passed during one of the most tranquil periods of history. Max Weiss called his Henrietta "Jetty" as his grandfather had called my great-great-grandmother, and I am convinced that in essentials all was with them as it is with us: fair weather, with occasional storms, periods of drought or pelting, rainy, chilly days and sultry hours in alternation. Children had measles, or toothache, or fell off a chair; school reports varied; a client failed to pay; an eagerly expected letter was long belated, or ill tidings came all too soon.

The business man did not live far from his place of business; he went home for lunch, to find his wife and children were already waiting round the table; week-ends were not yet invented; office hours began and ended at all times of day; and a provincial buyer might be discovered impatiently walking up and down before the premises at seven in the morning. Things were still very patriarchal; the customers knew the family, and expected to be taken home for lunch or dinner; sometimes they brought presents—a goose, a chicken, or some fruit—or even sent a barrel of wine, which was often a bad omen: the next draft would perhaps be returned unpaid.

Max Weiss's business premises in the "Moroccan-court"—a group of buildings, named after the carved image of a Moor over one of its many entrances—were not very spacious. In the spring he might stand at the window in his shirt-sleeves to watch the traffic, but the colder season found him busy at his desk.

Elizabeth Square, once a market-place, but later a promenade, containing many ancient trees, and a coffee-kiosk at which my grandmother took her afternoon cup of coffee, listening to the military band, seemed to become in autumn the rendezvous of all the sparrows of Europe. At least, so one would imagine from their infernal noise, and even the brass instruments could hardly drown the quarrelling, gossiping, and exchange of news

from all parts of the continent, in which these little brownish-grey birds indulged.

Grandfather's modest flat looked out upon this square, and the children could watch him leave the office from its windows, where they would sit on sunny afternoons, pretending to be studying their schoolbooks, but really watching the soldiers walking to and fro with the little peasant girls, dressed in all their finery, or the nursemaids with dozens of skirts worn one above another, in the strange fashion of certain Hungarian districts. Then they would shut their books with a clap, to go down into the park themselves. "Have you finished your homework already?"—"Of course!" An answer not unknown in our own days.

In the winter, when the huge tiled stove gave out its pleasant heat, they sat in the warm light of a paraffin table-lamp, working, or reading Fenimore Cooper's Red Indian stories, or Jules Verne's fantastic tales. . . . "Just fancy, he talks of people building underwater boats and flying machines; isn't he crazy?"

Everything went according to plan; school began in the early days of September; on October 1, inevitably the chestnut-roasters appeared with their little iron stoves, and the town was noisy with all the recruits, bedizened with ribbons and flowers, who went on this day to the barracks in order to join up, mostly under the anaesthetic of the local wines and spirits.

The days of the great fairs arrived, the times when grandfather was so busy with his foreign clients, the men who brought skins from all parts of the Balkans, and buyers came from Leipzig and Paris, and even from London. The whole family had to help on these occasions; and famous excursions were made to the innyards of one of the Old Ofen wine-growers, where, with the help of roasted chickens and geese, which one had brought from home, and the local wines, or brandies, business transactions were concluded with surprising ease, in spite of language difficulties, and former differences of opinion.

On May 1, when all the vehicles and horses were decorated with paper flowers, the family went abroad at dawn to pick lilac and enjoy the holiday.

In the middle of June began the school examinations, which were always held in public. The mothers and fathers were dressed in their best; the children were cold or sweating with terror, the masters masking their wrath behind hypocritical smiles. But on the 29th, at Peter and Paul, when all over the land the corn harvest began, the school term ended, and all those who could afford it left the city, which under the glaring summer sun had turned into a gigantic stove, emitting an intolerable heat by day and night.

Now began the great migration to the spas and

resorts, the country people moved from their cottages into their stables, in order to make room for the "summer people," whom they utterly despised and conscientiously fleeced

These "Swabian" peasants, the descendants of German colonists, who came to Hungary after the great Mongol and Turkish invasions, still spoke German only, and were shrewd, thrifty folk, selling their farm produce, their scouring sand, or whatever they carried to town, at high prices, making money hand over fist. From their midst was recruited a certain class of Philistine town dwellers, who never lost their very limited outlook on life, but were extremely cunning and crafty. Most of these people lived in Buda or the outer districts of Pest

The village children were a nasty lot, but one could run about dressed as one pleased, and unwashed, a great attraction for juveniles, and it was all fun for them, with the horses and cows, even the tummy ache resulting from unripe apples or apricots. Only for the housewives it made little difference, for them it meant only a change of sink, but the daily work and the cares of the household were the same as ever, unless they could be transferred to the shoulders of a little servant maid

The town was nearly depopulated, excepting the poorest of the poor, or men engaged upon absolutely essential jobs, everybody went away until the end of August, when the feast of St. Stephen brought thousands of strangers into Budapest, and the family returned

Yes, in those days everything went according to plan, the clocks and watches ticked away, the leaves of the calendars came off one by one

In Max Weiss's petty cash book an occasional business trip is recorded. The old apprentice's dream in the cap maker's workshop had come true, there were journeys to the Leipzig fair, to Vienna.

The evenings were free, as though after dark all furs, like all cats, were grey. A few business friends were visited, or a theatre. Johann Strauss II still ruled, and his latest hit, the libretto based on the great stock-exchange crash, "The Bat," *Die Fledermaus*, became a world wide success, and the first real modern operetta

But again heavy storm-clouds were piling up in the political sky. Germany, for a change, was planning a new war against France, and was prevented from opening hostilities only by the energetic intervention of Francis Joseph and the Czar. Britain was not amused, however, but took the opportunity, while France was otherwise occupied, of buying up a majority of the Suez Canal shares. But this transaction only partly made up for the losses suffered in London and other capitals when a national bankruptcy was declared in Turkey. An insurrection broke out in Herzegovina,

and things were beginning to look pretty grim, when the French and German consuls were murdered in Salonica, and the Turks, as though to console themselves for their financial losses, began to slaughter their Bulgarian subjects. In New York, Berlin, Paris, and Manchester there was a chorus of indignation in the popular Press, "The Balkans again!"

Those were eventful days; Alexander Graham Bell had invented the telephone, "Tom Sawyer" had been published, the Bayreuth festivals were opened with the Nibelungen Ring, and now Mr. Gladstone had to get up in the House of Commons and scourge the perpetrators of the Bulgarian horrors. Would the Danubian basin always be a centre of international trouble?

Francis Joseph and the Czar met again in Berlin; a Russo-German-Austrian note asked for Turkish reforms; and the result? Sultan Abdul Aziz was assassinated, and the new Sultan, Abdul Hamid II, was attacked by Serbia and Montenegro.

In 1877 died my great-grandmother, Wolf's wife, Elenora, after a life which most people would call uneventful, for its incidents, its joys and sorrows, its cares and troubles, would have seemed unimportant to others.

Russia declared war on Turkey, and when the Sultan's troops capitulated at Plevna, to add insult to injury, the Czar met Francis Joseph at Reichstadt, where they agreed that Bosnia should be occupied by Austria. Those Balkans again!

But as the world cannot bear to see others enrich themselves, the Berlin Congress was convened, a most illustrious company of the representatives of six Great Powers meeting to decide the fate of Europe "for all time," or at least till the next complication should arise.

Disraeli, Bismarck, and *le beau pendu* Andrassy played their gambits of high international politics, while the other representatives were entertained, or waited in the ante-rooms, passing the time until the great men had spoken. It was agreed that the Russian sphere of influence should be reduced, to the advantage of the Habsburgs; an independent Serbia was created, and a new Rumania born; and since the Turks had already proved themselves incapable of ruling their own subjects, Eastern Rumelia was surrendered to their control. Francis Joseph was to pocket Bosnia-Herzegovina? The news was received with nods and smiles.

There were great festivities, and historical tableaux were staged, to show the world how harmonious the Congress had been. Peace and goodwill were written on every face. Bismarck, the unmusical, slept away the fatigue of the conferences during the first performances of Brahms' symphonies, Numbers 1 and 2. In the background a Herr von Mannlicher ap-
atents

sold Austria-Hungary his new invention, a repeating rifle, which would make mass murder a child's game, and a Mr Hughes invented the microphone, which would one day facilitate the broadcasting of poisonous propaganda to generations as yet unborn.

About this time my father, having completed his education at a commercial secondary school, arrived in Leipzig, at the age of sixteen, to learn the finer points of fur-dealing in a business friend's office. He spoke German fluently, but, as I was informed in later years, with a strong Hungarian accent.

The Germans of the Reich were always greatly amused by the accent of the German speaking Danubians, forgetting that they themselves spoke a great variety of dialects. While the tom-cat-spitting C's and the ear-rasping R's which distinguished the Berliner's accent, seemed the music of the spheres to the Prussians, the Bavarian and Tyrolese, whose soft mountain dialect had the lilt of a Welshman's English, found it as unpleasant as the Scottish Highlanders find the Oxford or the Cockney accent.

Just as London music-hall audiences roar with delight at Gracie Fields's Lancashire accents, think the Yorkshire burr and the Devon drawl amusing, and find something comical in the Irish brogue, so the Austrian tongue was a constant source of mirth in the "RRREICHCH." Because the Viennese softened his R's, filed the edges off his CH's, while the more aristocratic and cultured circles "frenchified" their German into a slightly nasal idiom, the Berliner saw a knock about comedian in every Danubian, instead of realising that his own way of speaking, or the alleged German of the Saxons, was much more suitable for clowning on "the Halls."

Hanover and Hamburg come nearest to speaking German in "pure culture," while a Rhinelander is too close to France not to be strongly influenced in speech and character by this Romanic people.

But in spite of these differences of idiom and differences in character, Francis Joseph and Otto von Bismarck concluded in 1879, during a visit to Gastein, the Austrian spa, a secret German-Austrian defensive alliance. No one was told what was afoot; it was just a pleasant holiday for the Iron Chancellor, a short hunting trip for the Emperor, and a few smiles and bows were vouchsafed to the public. . . . One never knew what might happen; things over there in Russia seemed to be getting serious, the People's Socialist Party had been formed there a few months earlier, nihilists and anarchists had been shot or sent to Siberia; and they had a very strange literature. Neither Francis Joseph nor Bismarck was exactly bookish, but they had heard of that man Dostoevsky, who had just published a novel, *The Brothers Karamazoff*, which did not, however, concern them. . . .

Of much more interest to the Crown than the masterpieces of Russian literature were the aspirations of the Hungarian government to "Magyarify" the minorities living on Hungarian soil. Count Koloman Tisza, the Premier, made every effort, not even shrinking from repressive measures if these appeared necessary, to turn Slovaks, Croats, Swabians, and others into Magyars. Under his premiership any foreign-sounding name could be changed into a Hungarian name by a simple application; if stamped with a 50-kreutzer stamp (value, about one shilling) it effected the change within a few days. Schoolchildren were encouraged to make the change by their teachers, and employees by their employers, while civil servants were warned by their superiors that outlandish names would diminish the bearer's prospects of promotion. Before very long most of the Levis were transformed to Léveys, the Feldmans became Forbats, and the Piukovitses Polyas, and if the old initials were retained as far as possible, this was done only to avoid the replacement of monograms on household linen.

At the same time a wave of baptism swept over the country. Jews were converted by the thousand, transformed overnight into Catholics or Protestants, and mixed marriages became the fashion. The Church and the government alike promised the prospective converts and bearers of new names that all their sins would be forgiven them, especially in view of the fact that their ancestors had entered Hungary by a different route from that followed by Prince Arpád, and at a different time.

However, this official encouragement did not prevent the public from nicknaming the new Gentiles and Hungarians "the fifty-kreutzer Magyars," or "the standing Christians," the former referring to the cost of changing the name, the latter to the fact that baptism was received in an upright, and not in a prostrate position.

Spring was in the air again; the dangerous month of March had come; and in the middle of this March of 1881 the Czar Alexander II was assassinated. The newspapers were full of the tragedy until some new sensation cropped up; it attracted the public interest for a day or so, selling a number of extra editions; to be driven out of the mind of the man in the street by some fresh item of interest.

But the mind of the "man in the street" is not simply the mind of a single man hurrying along between two rows of houses, looking in the shops, evading the traffic; it is a collective mind, a mentality totally different from that of the individual.

To play up to the "street" mentality, to transform the decent individual citizen's human feelings into the wilful and, was the aim of the agitators and demagogues.

quiet, too peaceable for their liking, people went about their business in Prague, Vienna and Pest, politics was a second, or third, or last consideration, there was no troubled water to fish in, if one began to shout against the Jews in Parliament one was only laughed at, while a demand for the cancellation of their rights only elicited indignation from magnates and commoners alike

Three Hungarian Members of Parliament, Istoczy, Simonyi and Onody, typical village gentry, narrow minded and envious, influenced by certain German pamphlets, began a campaign against a number of political immigrants, fugitives from the Russian pogroms which were raging in the empire of the Czars. They took this opportunity of calling Hungary's attention to the fact that the world's two thousand million inhabitants were endangered by the Jews, who were dispersed all over the globe

The Magyar parliament, however, was unwilling to lend an ear to their accusations, for the European public had just been profoundly shocked by the events in Russia, where scenes had been witnessed of mob savagery on a scale unknown since the plague massacres in the fourteenth century. Kiev, Warsaw, Odessa, and indeed the whole of Mother Russia from the Black Sea to the Baltic, were one living reproach against humanity, making the onlooker ashamed of civilisation

Still, this little party of Hungarian firebrands did not give in, they continued their agitation and provocation, and did not hesitate to employ the foulest means in order to attain their end

From a little village, Tisza Eszlar, situated in the immediate neighbourhood of the estate of the rich Antisemite Onody, on April 1, 1882, a fourteen year-old girl, Esther, had disappeared. As all enquiries were in vain, the rumour was put about that the girl had been murdered by a small community of Jews who lived in the same place

Two months later a girl's body was recovered from the river, but as the corpse was too decomposed for identification, only the clothes could be recognised as those which Esther had worn, and since no signs of violence were found the authorities quite correctly decided that this was a case of death by drowning, such as frequently occurred in this district

However, as this conclusion did not suit Onody and his friends, they circulated the story that the body recovered from the river Tisza was not that of the missing girl, but that her clothes had been put on a corpse stolen from a hospital by the Jews, who wanted to avert suspicion, as they had kidnapped Esther, killed her, and used her blood for preparing their Passover bread. A mass hysteria was worked up, witnesses came forward who swore that they had watched through a key hole while all this was done in the local

Temple; and after the six-year-old son of one of the accused persons had been cajoled and terrified into giving evidence for the prosecution, fifteen people were thrown into prison.

The trial lasted over two months. It afforded a striking example of the demoralising power of this mania of Antisemitism. The accusers did not hesitate to rake up the old fable of blood-guilt, and other perennial slogans of obscurantism and superstition, in order to excite the primitive minds of the peasantry.

The case of Tisza Eszlár was one of the most dramatic *causes célèbres* in the history of criminal law, and this shocking scandal horrified the whole of civilised Europe. Eötvös, an outstanding Magyar counsel, proved at once that the Jews were victims of a conspiracy, and by demonstrating that nothing could be seen through the key-hole in question he exploded the whole story. Even the president of the court himself, an ardent Jew-baiter, had to admit that not a word of all the imputations was true, and so the accused were unanimously acquitted.

But while this trial was in progress Jew-baiting continued unabated in Hungary, reaching the pitch of wholesale pogroms in several towns. The government had to put a stop to them, finally ordering out troops, and Count Koloman Tisza, the Prime Minister, declared in Parliament that under no circumstances would he tolerate the re-introduction of mediæval ideas imported from Russia and Germany. Accusations of this sort, he said, disgrace the accusers rather than the accused, and even though the new Czar, or the government of Rumania, which had just become a kingdom, ruled by King Carol and his poet-wife Carmen Sylva, *née* Elizabeth of Wied, were legalising Antisemitism, the crown of Habsburg would nip in the bud any attempt to undermine the freedom of any of her subjects.

But almost before this political tempest had abated the terrible tragedy of the Vienna Ring theatre, where four hundred people perished in the flames, distracted the public mind; Benz and Daimler established the first petroleum motor factory; Serbia became a kingdom; the Triple Alliance of Austria, Germany and Italy was openly declared; in short, day after day there was something new and sensational, and the morning's front-page news was stale by the evening. In 1884 Germany occupied S.W. Africa, the Serbs under their new king, Milan, invaded Bulgaria, and now that the Balkans were again in the news, Johann Strauss II, who was not only a fine composer, but also a good man of business, profited by the occasion, when all eyes were turned to this part of the world, to produce the "Gypsy Baron."

As the pages turn, the history of this period is full of bloodshed and trouble; if here and there a brighter page occurs it is soon

overshadowed by a fresh tragedy. The Empress Elizabeth was enjoying a visit to her old home at Possenhofen in the summer of 1886 when her cousin, the mad King Ludwig II of Bavaria, committed suicide not far away, drowning himself and his physician in the Starnberg lake.

But the reports of such sensational items, so eagerly read by the public, only serve to make their own life seem more enjoyable; as the room seems cosier, and the fire brighter and warmer, when one watches a snow-storm raging outside the window. People see an ambulance or a fire-engine racing down the street, and they are conscious of a pleasant little shiver down the spine; they do not feel that they themselves might be the victims of fire or accident, and the incident serves as a stimulant rather than a warning.

CHAPTER IX

COFFEA ARABICA, JANITORS AND "VICES"

My father, who in the meantime had returned from Leipzig and taken up a post in my grandfather's business, was travelling about Europe, working hard and enjoying himself. He was young, and Budapest was a gay city; fine theatres and other places of amusement were built, and the threefold capital, like an outgrown suit, was soon too small for the increasing population. Even in the vicinity of the three cities there were signs of new life after centuries of stagnation. First the still empty building plots were filled; then the towns began to expand; tentacles crept forward, isolated hamlets and small villages were surrounded, larger ones were absorbed, and a veritable flood of houses burst forth, overrunning wide areas of cultivated soil.

The little streets of cottages, that had such a resemblance to rows of white nomad tents, were lengthened into endless ribbons, and as dusty highways full of traffic they lost their original character.

Creeping outward in long, monstrous lines, rarely interrupted by a church or other more sightly building, effacing every spot of green, turning wide meadows into ugly squares, these giant serpentine lines of roofs and chimneys disfigured the landscape.

The small one-room cottages, consisting of just four walls and a primitive door, but rarely boasting the luxury of a window, were multiplied until they touched; three or four of such dwellings would be stuck together, like the cells of a honeycomb, and presently groups of such juxtaposed cottages would form. But each group somehow remained a separate little community. In the beginning these hovels would enclose a small courtyard; later, when the ground increased in value, they were piled in layers, on top of one another, forming long tenement houses. The cave-like rooms had not yet lost their original simplicity, each representing a complete residence, with its door opening on to the yard, or a corridor, or a staircase.

In many Hungarian towns a balcony runs round each floor, as in some of the Swiss *châlets*; here, however, it is not on the outside of the house, as in Switzerland, but overlooks the inner courtyard, connecting the flats with one another and at the same time giving them access to the stairs.

This form of construction, deriving from the Roman *arcade*, has been simplified in some Danubian districts

stone and iron gangway, giving these towns a very characteristic appearance, and at the same time a type of social life which is found elsewhere only in the southern climates of Spain, Italy and the Orient, where the streets play a similar role.

Consequently many of the East-Central European capitals and smaller cities, and even the villages, although they may preserve their individual style, dictated by their surroundings, climatic conditions, and the composition of their populations, together with historical and other factors, may have appeared curiously uniform to the inexperienced eye. This impression was produced by the similarity of the more recent buildings, and of the typical street, balcony and coffee-house life, especially up to the end of the Habsburg Empire.

Who could name them all from memory? The towns of the upper Danube, with their Gothic spires, becoming, as the stream flows eastward, more and more Baroque, in Linz, Melk, and imperial Vienna, the pride of the Habsburgs. Or those strange mixtures of ultra-modern town-planning and rustic simplicity, Budapest, Belgrade, the parvenu Bucharest, and oriental Sofia. They all have their own souls, but they cannot slough off this common likeness.

We see it also in Prague, that ancient seat of learning, where the Hradzin overlooks the old bridges, the picturesque little lanes, the former ghetto, and other mediaeval relics; and even in the mighty Adriatic sea-ports of Trieste and Fiume, so international, so Italian, and yet so like the other towns of Central and Eastern Europe.

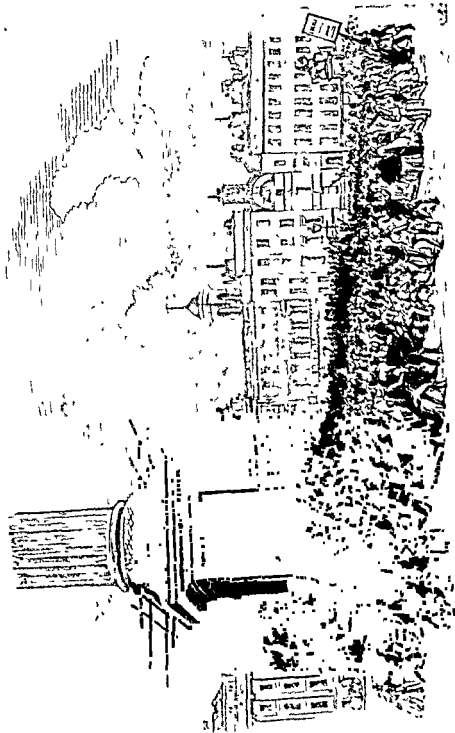
Innsbruck, Brixen and Bozen, nestling under snow-covered peaks, with arcaded streets, protecting the pedestrian from an almost tropical sun; and the dreamy Hungarian mining towns, then Dubrovnik and Split, on the Dalmatian coast, formerly centres of commerce . . . Salzburg and Graz too . . . an endless list. All are different; their peoples wear their national costumes, and speak their own languages and dialects; one may be maritime, another alpine, a few occidental, while others are oriental and exotic, and yet in all their diversity they are strangely similar in character, definitely of South-Eastern Europe.

The potent influences of mechanisation, the wireless, and the cinema, which are in a certain sense Americanising the whole world, cannot be resisted, and have to some extent sapped the strength of this very characteristic Habsburgism, but for the time being it is still extant and observable.

The "desirable family residence" of the English type, or the villa, is the ideal of many Central Europeans, but the majority live in flats, and spend hours in the coffee-houses, in the open street, or on the balcony.



BUDAPEST, 1850



LOUIS NOSSUTH'S RECEPTION AT TRAFALGAR SQUARE, 1851

Speculators soon discovered how profitable these large tenement buildings, known in Danubian countries under the name of "rent-barracks," could be, and the ugly blocks of flats, often pretentiously styled "rent palaces," began to line the streets.

The lavishly decorated façades, the impressive flights of stairs, the panels of real or imitation marble, the turrets, caryatides, pilasters and sculptured portals, belied the lack of internal conveniences, the bareness of the walls, and the small dimensions of the rooms.

Some of the tenants, arriving from their country villages, tried for a while to preserve the rural atmosphere; flowers appeared in the windows, a pot of chives did duty for a kitchen garden, and a goose, or a few chickens or rabbits, lived their brief and unhappy life in some inconspicuous corner, but the provincial habits soon became urbanised, as the city fashions replaced the peasant costumes.

As in other spheres of life, here too class distinctions were manifest; a few of the tenement-houses became palaces in reality, with spacious and expensive flats, provided with bathrooms and other modern sanitary amenities, which were totally lacking in the poorer districts. Gas and electricity were installed, the village pump or well, replaced by the water-tap, disappeared from court-yards.

To make the house pay, every inch of space had to be utilised. The entry was let to a greengrocer, fruiterer or confectioner, the outer ground-floor flats were turned into shops, and even parts of the basement were occupied by cobblers, plumbers, or other tradespeople, the sounds of the workshop adding to the general impression of liveliness, and the rents to the prosperity of the landlord.

The landlord was also a landowner, as on the Continent the building-site is owned by the person who owns the building, and the form of leasehold property is unknown.

The spacious lofts were used as store-rooms, and for drying the washing, while the communal laundry was established in the basement, where each tenant family had a cubicle for coal and firewood, just as they had their own section of the loft.

There were always two staircases: a richly-decorated, roomy staircase in the front of the house, for tenants and visitors only, and a service staircase at the back, badly lit, primitive, and dirty, where the maids ran up and down, and coalheavers or other pariahs carried their burdens.

Automatically the building divided itself into two distinct worlds, "the front" and "the back." To the former belonged the residents of the flats whose doors opened upon the landings of the front stairs, and whose windows overlooked the street, while the humbler tenants, whose doors could be reached only from the inner balconies, were relegated to the rear of the building; and

lastly, there were those who led a segregated existence in the underworld of the basement flats.

As the younger inhabitants only slept and ate in the parental flats, and after meals, almost before they had swallowed their last mouthful, rushed out on to the balcony or into the courtyard or on to the stairs, making the most infernal din, the uproar, when the children were not at school, was terrific. If a house was quiet this was only because it was situated in one of the more select parts of the city, where, according to juvenile opinion, life was not worth living, as the people, and even the children, were so terribly well-behaved.

To control this vitality, to save at least some of the house's window-panes, and make life a little more tolerable for the adult tenants, the landlord employed a concierge, janitor, or house-porter, who was not only a Cerberus and house-policeman, a sort of liaison officer between the owner and the occupants, but had at the same time dozens of other functions, partly self-imposed or prescribed by tradition.

He was responsible for collecting the rent and keeping the rent-roll up to date, together with other records. The very strict system of registration enforced by the Central European States was less discreet than the British methods, and detailed forms had to be filled in by the tenant on arrival or departure, giving dates of birth, occupation, religion, the former place of residence, and even those of his parents. Consequently, the concierge, being in possession of these items, was very well informed concerning the private lives of the tenants, and owing to his semi-official connection with the police, a heritage of the Emperor Joseph's days, when he was still a confidential police agent, he even nowadays often makes it his business to discover things which are really no longer any affair of his, but in which the Gestapo and other sinister institutions found great help.

Highly suspicious of strangers, if they asked him questions he scratched his head, shrugged his shoulders, and "couldn't say." But this ignorance could be converted, by a lavish tip, into the most exact information. It then became clear that he knew every detail of his tenants' most private affairs, from their financial situation, and what they usually had for dinner on Sunday, to the identity of the young man "who goes with the daughter of Number Seven"—for he preferred to ignore names, replacing them by numbers.

The house-porter's language was always a mixture of dialects; he might have a Slavonic accent when speaking German, or a Magyar accent when expressing himself in Czech, and, strangely enough, I have never, in my long experience, known a house-porter whose name was not a tongue-twister.

His political views changed with the person to whom he was speaking; they were fairly "leftish" on the backstairs, but highly conservative when respectfully expounded to one of the front-stair gentlemen. Still, in one respect he was a great royalist, who honoured the memory of the Empress Maria Theresa and Emperor Leopold, by aspiring, like them, to produce a family of sixteen children; a figure not infrequently exceeded by men of his calling.

The house-porter's quarters were usually so situated that the front door and the stairs could be conveniently watched from the windows. Their atmosphere was highly characteristic; a powerful blend of stale tobacco smoke, *Sauer-kraut* fumes, and steam from the laundry, with a faint alcoholic undertone and a slight fusty smell, as though the rooms had never been ventilated since the day of arrival with his family. Here were kept the loft and basement keys, and the rota, according to which the use of the laundry and the drying space was allotted to the tenants in turn.

From this kennel Cerberus would rush out, bellowing at the top of his voice, when the pandemonium outside had grown beyond endurance, or when the clatter of falling glass indicated that another window had succumbed as the result of a game of football on one of the balconies. An uncanny hush followed such a catastrophe, for even those youngsters who had not taken part in the game retired indoors for the time being, and "washed their hands" in a symbolical sense.

A similar display of his vocal powers occurred after ten o'clock in the morning if anyone had overlooked the fact that rugs and carpets could be beaten only up to this hour, and that bedding put to air on the balcony-rails had now to be taken indoors.

One of the strangest phenomena observable in the Danubian countries was the prevalence of artistic inclinations among the offspring of janitors. Inspired by the tones of pianos, violins, flutes and other instruments of torture emanating from the many open windows, they naturally emulated the performer, having a decided preference for brass instruments, usually of large dimensions.

In spite of his children's virtuosity the house-porter was ready to encourage street musicians to perform in the courtyard, and I have always suspected him of sharing in the takings of these artists, and also in those of the beggars who infested the stairs and balconies at all hours of the day.

Small, decrepit hurdy-gurdys and musical boxes, sorely in need of new dentures, took their turn with huge, upright barrel-organs or mechanical pianos on wheels. Blind singers of patriotic ballads, who, in spite of their infirmity, were quick to spot the copper coins thrown down by kind-hearted ladies, were followed by violinists, mandolin and guitar players, accordionists, and other performers.

Their tunes were eagerly taken up by the little barefooted servant-girls, who, while wielding their charcoal-heated flat-irons, or beating carpets on the balconies, or polishing the floors with brushes strapped to their feet, seemed to derive fresh energy from these sentimental songs, which they repeated at the top of their not always musical voices, in the seventeen languages of the Dual Monarchy.

The house-porter's nocturnal duties included the opening and closing of the front door, which was locked, in accordance with the police regulations, from 10.0 p.m. until 6.0 a.m. For this service he, or any member of his family who opened the door, was entitled to a small fee from the tenant or visitor entering or leaving the house, the value of the coin being left to the generosity of the donor.

A little maidservant returning from her day out, trying to wriggle past him as unobtrusively as possible, would be greeted by some remark of a slightly erotic nature on paying her penny, while the lady from Number Three on the first floor received only a discreet smile when her friend, who protected her during the absence of her commercial-traveller husband, slipped his shilling into the porter's hand.

The only person in the world whom he respected, besides his own wife, was the landlord, and he always spoke in whispers of both.

Madame Concierge was the uncrowned queen of all the maidservants and charwomen in the neighbourhood, and her insight into the private affairs of the tenants was far beyond that of her consort's. Her venomous tongue, deadlier than the fangs of a serpent, could poison the lives of those as yet unborn by sheer virulence of slander.

She regulated the alcoholic consumption of her spouse by more or less energetic measures, with varying success, sometimes resorting to physical force, especially if she had detected him in any "going on" on the back stairs, when the springtime fragrance of lilac was wafted even into her gloomy precincts.

Then one might see her like an avenging fury, swinging a rolling-pin or other household implement, and woe to the "female" caught red-handed by the old lady—for no one ever saw a young house-porter's wife.

The high spot of the janitor's life, from the Baltic to the Adriatic, the Black Forest to the Black Sea, was New Year's Day, which was rivalled, in the Magyar regions, by Easter Monday.

This solemn feast of the Resurrection was greatly honoured in all the Catholic countries, and in Central Europe it was distinguished not only by intense ecclesiastical activity, and the pageantry of religious processions and military parades, but also by many popular customs, some of them so ancient that the origins are forgotten.

In the country districts of pre-war Hungary, where rustic fashions

prevailed, the peasant lads would forcibly wash the maidens on Easter Monday, ducking them under the village pump, or throwing a bucket of water over them. For this kindly attention a glass of brandy, Easter eggs, or flowers were expected by the men, and offered by the girls.

In the towns this rustic ceremony, which may have had its roots in the rite of baptism, or in some pagan feast, had been refined into the employment of a scent-spray, and all over Hungary stalls were erected on Easter Monday which did a flourishing trade in all sorts of squirts and sprays and scented waters.

From early dawn onwards the postmen, milkmen, grocer's boys, or whoever first came into contact with the womenfolk, made it their business to spray a few drops of scent over them, and received, in return, an Easter egg, a glass of spirits, and in certain cases, money. People in "society" visited one another, giving presents of costly scent in expensive containers, and boxes of sweets, while the lower classes regarded the practice not only as a source of amusement, but also as a source of income, on which they counted from year to year.

The scented water used by the house-porters all over Hungary had a characteristic aroma which in my parental home was known simply as "the stink." My mother wore for the occasion a special dressing-gown, which having been duly sprayed by the milkman, the butcher's boy, and others whom one could not evade by merely sending them out a tip, was afterwards aired for weeks, without ever losing its unpleasant smell.

Among the elect, who had to be received in person, was the concierge. He began his round of spraying on the front stairs, planning his round in accordance with the sums he might expect. But as he was often offered a glass of wine, peach-brandy, or some other tempting beverage, which he could not refuse "without offending your Honour," his powers of equilibrium were soon so affected that one of his numerous sons or other masculine relatives had to take over his pleasant duty, until the deputy in turn developed the same symptoms, and a new substitute had to be found.

A very similar ceremony took place on the morning of New Year's Day all over the Danubian basin. After stacks of New Year's cards had arrived by post, the dustmen, the tradespeople, and in a word, everybody who wanted to make a little money, presented in person calendars, almanacs, and other valueless tokens of good will, always expecting their rewards in coin of the realm and liquor. Consequently, all the towns and villages along the Danube, which had not yet recovered from the celebrations of New Year's Eve, were soon filled with such noise and disorder as beggars description.

It often took weeks to bring the house porter and his family back to normal, and almost invariably the condition of the vice janitor was made a pretext for discharging him and finding a successor.

This gentleman, called the "Vice" for short, was the underling of the house porter, and had to do the most menial kinds of work. His domain was exclusively the back stairs, where nobody respected him, not even the children. They never interrupted their games on his approach, or hid the chalk with which they had been scrawling on the walls.

The "Vice" had to take off his cap, with the customary "I kiss your hand, Sir, or Madam," as the case might be, even to the maids, while his chief honoured only the tenants of the flats and their grown up children with this form of greeting.

The vice janitor, with his wife, went at night from door to door, collecting the household refuse and ashes, and helped in the carrying of coal, and other arduous activities. He cleaned the stairs and the courtyard, and fulfilled all the various duties of a semi serf. In modern days the stoking of the furnace for the central heating and the maintenance of the lift were added to these obligations, while the lift was operated by the janitor himself, on account of the possible tips.

The "Vice" and Jan,
 harboured his
 by his unmarried daughters, various lodgers, and some in
 the country

The air in this den, if the atmosphere can be so termed, was strongly reminiscent of the Zoo, but in spite of this indescribable poverty the "Vice" and his family were the objects of envy, and their life was the admiration of relatives whose visits to the city were few and far between.

Villagers saw in his urban surroundings an Eldorado of prosperity, and imagined that his days must be a succession of thrilling events, amusements, and pleasures. This will give some indication of their standard of life. In their privation, distress, and destitution, some of these peasants, especially in the Eastern parts of Hungary, the great plains of Rumania and Bulgaria, and the valleys of the Balkans, lived on a level below that of the animals. Anyone who visited them in their penury, and saw their starved and diseased children, would be cured of their misconceptions of the picturesque rural life. The state of these wretched folk was one of the greatest crimes of an otherwise prosperous world, which had so much money to spare for unessential purposes, and could find time to prevent cruelty to dogs and horses, while such conditions existed not so very far from the great centres of civilisation.

The most attractive feature of the city, for men living in the isolated "tanyas"¹ of the Magyar steppe, or in the remote Alpine huts of the Tyrol, was the coffee-houses. They seemed, in the tales of the fortunate ones who had visited them, a fairy-tale dream, a land of Cockaigne, full of magical tables, and the listeners could never hear enough of these institutions.

But even though the real coffee-houses had little in common with the dreams of these poverty-stricken people, they played, and still play, such an important part in the life of Central and South-Eastern Europe that their history and psychology is worth examination.

Towards the end of the sixteenth century a new beverage was introduced by the Arabs to the aristocracy of Stamboul, and these eternal loungers soon learned to enjoy a cup of the dark liquid, while inhaling deep draughts of pleasure from the bubbling narghilé or long chibouk.

But the Turks having been for some centuries the rulers of South-Eastern Europe, this aromatic decoction, prepared from the roasted seeds of the evergreen *coffea arabica* shrub, began by following the Danube, and finally conquered the globe, establishing itself most firmly in the countries bordering on the great river.

The coffee shrub, which was originally indigenous to Abyssinia, and which even received its name from the Ethiopian province of Kaffa, is now grown in many tropical countries, and the sales of the green coffee-beans reach astronomical figures in tons. The bad habit of stimulating our jaded nerves with the alkaloid caffeine contained in this black nectar has spread over half the earth, and since a certain Herr Kohlschützky, two hundred and sixty years ago, opened the first coffee-house in Vienna, offering his customers coffee taken as booty from the Turks, hundreds of thousands of similar establishments have been founded all over the world. But in spite of their ubiquity, Central Europe alone understands the real meaning of the word, and even though "Vienna Coffee-houses" may be opened in London, New York, Madrid, Berlin, and other capitals, they are but poor imitations, having lost their soul in transit.

The coffee-house life is one of the strongest social links, an indissoluble psychological cement, uniting the heterogeneous components of the Danubian countries. Despite the mutual hostility of Czechs, Magyars, Austrians, Poles, Serbs, Bulgars, Rumanians, and all the other nations or races who live and continually squabble in this quarter of Europe, their coffee-houses are in principle absolutely uniform, and from this uniformity springs a certain community of spirit.

¹ Hamlets, usually far out in the Steppe.

This uniformity may perhaps have its earliest origin in the poverty from which the masses have emerged, for it is not long since they were serfs, and a kind of semi-slavery still exists in many parts of South-Eastern Europe. It was afterwards enhanced by the powerful influence of the centralised civil service, priesthood, and army, whose members, to please their masters, the Habsburgs, adapted themselves to the Empire and surrendered their individuality.

— Other factors making for solidarity were the bad housing conditions and the general low standard of living, while in painful contrast a comparatively small aristocracy made an extravagant display of luxury and wealth.

All this made the Danubian peoples very receptive to the temptations held out by the coffee-house life, which offered a show of opulence, of spurious prosperity, and thus, inculcating the acceptance of unreal values, taught the masses to pretend, to show off, and to live above their means.

At the same time, on the other hand, it did a great deal toward introducing certain Western manners, and popularising learning and knowledge, by placing at the disposal of the men and women of the people a large selection of newspapers and magazines from all parts of the globe. Further, by means of orchestral music, it cultivated and improved the popular taste for this art, while the eternal discussions that went on around the stone- or marble-topped tables created a special sort of culture, which was aware of international literature and of art in general.

The upper ten thousands were here, as everywhere, at least one or more generations in advance of the lower classes in respect of social and other amenities. They had their clubs and casinos, their sports grounds, their meeting-places, and their palatial residences. Butlers, lackeys, maidservants, page-boys, secretaries and valets, made life pleasant and easy for them, while the others, the great masses of the middle and lower strata of society, living, without domestic help, in their chilly little flats, wanted at least a colourable imitation of them.

This the coffee-house provided. Here the simple burgher became at once guest and master, here he had his taste of social life and gaiety. This was his club, his castle, his sports ground, the study where he acquired learning, a place of amusement, a means of distraction. Card-tables, chessboards, dominoes replaced the green tables of the casino, the illustrated magazines were his picture-gallery; billiards, and later ping-pong, offered opportunities of "sport," and the whole atmosphere inspired the feeling that he too was somebody in this world. The Fata Morgana of aristocratic life, the mirage of wealth and power, was no longer so

remote ; in this magic palace the outer world was no more than an uneasy dream.

Of course, he was well enough aware that he and his fellows were only "acting" ; but just as children, in their games, forget that they are "just pretending," so the Danubian surrendered to this mummery until it became his second nature.

They were numberless, these places of assembly where, for the price of a cup of coffee, one could spend hours in the company of others ; they were everywhere, from the Balkans to the Polish Carpathians, from the alps of the Tyrol to the Rumanian swamps. Some were large and luxurious, others were small and shabby, but neither size nor the style of decoration, neither the language, nor the religion, nor the political views of their customers affected the general atmosphere, which was the same in the huge air-conditioned coffee-palaces, served by a numerous and expensively-dressed staff, as in the little one-room "Grand Café," where the proprietor was cook, waiter, telephonist, and porter, all in one person.

The atmosphere ? A blend of fresh tobacco smoke and the souls of innumerable cigars and cigarettes already turned into ashes, now only a faint grey mist, lingering under the discoloured ceiling ; laden with the aroma of coffee, the appetising odour of hot rolls, newly-baked bread and pastries, together with a whiff of perfumes, an undertone of floor-polish, and, on rainy days, a flavour of wet raincoats, umbrellas, and rubber goloshes. The ears are assailed by the murmur of voices, sometimes drowned by the strains of an orchestra, a Cigány band, a few fiddlers, or even a pianist only, or a gramophone. Music, however, was an inessential feature of the real coffee-houses, generally provided only in the evening, and connoisseurs frequented the quieter houses, where they could talk undisturbed until they were oblivious of the outer world.

Here one could forget unpaid bills and income-tax demands, forget that shoes had to be soled and teeth stopped or extracted, that one's superior in the office was not in reality the agreeable fellow one had described to one's circle of acquaintances, who had similar troubles.

They all gave these rude retorts to their chiefs only in imagination, behind the safe bastions of the coffee-house windows, and they told the same stories of fictitious adventures to attentive hearers. These knew that the stories were not true, but they pretended to believe them, hoping that when their turn came they too would meet with at least a semblance of belief.

Manners and customs were firmly established by tradition, and the strict Spanish ceremonial of coffee-house usage could not be trifled with. It was much the same in the metropolitan, marble-

built, heavily-gilded establishments where oil paintings and costly mirrors adorned the walls as in the simplest village "Beisl" or cafeteria.

The coffee must be good, but it was less important as a beverage than as a means to an end; it represented the obolus which enabled the customer to partake of all this imaginary splendour.

Entering this unreal world, he had the right to insist on a title. He became at once "your honour," "your greatness," or even "your grace." The form of address was always one or more degrees above that to which he was entitled in reality, although in real life he found it beneath his dignity to permit exaggerations in this respect. Here he was greeted with bows and the reverent "I-kiss your hand"; a form of courtesy deriving from the days of serfdom, and was then ceremoniously escorted to the throne of his accustomed chair—"near the second window."

No questions were asked, as he had already graciously consented to accept the "usual," and presently the *capuciner* arrived, accompanied by a tray with four tumblers of water, a basket of rolls and crescents, and a small metal dish of sugar.

To ask merely for "coffee," when there were a dozen ways of preparing and serving it, would have been sacrilege, betraying the ignorant foreigner, who would drink anything, and would even dare to sit down at the table where at a quarter past three his Excellency the General would take his *mélange*! He was a real excellency and a genuine general, for even in this world of exaggerations bogus military ranks were tabu, and the proper forms had to be strictly observed on addressing an officer.

The soldier in Central Europe was forbidden to wear musti, from the moment of leaving the military academy or entering the army as a conscript, to the hour when he was carried to the cemetery, always to the solemn strains of Chopin's *Marche Funèbre*.

This was the reason of the prevalence of uniforms in public at all hours of the day. It split the world into two distinct halves; the half "where officers may appear" and the half where "men are allowed to go."

No one would have dreamt of visiting one of the establishments listed and placarded in barracks and officers' mess-rooms as "unsuitable," and to be put "on the list" meant ruin to the proprietor, for he would then be able to cater only for the lowest class of customer.

In the larger towns, where there were many coffee-houses, officers would patronise a special house, or even several, where certain arms and regiments occupied separate rooms and certain tables. The same practice was followed by physicians, the legal profession, artists, journalists, and business men; if one wanted to

consult one of the latter it was simpler to go to "his coffee-house" than to look up a trade directory.

The smaller provincial towns and the villages could not offer this convenience, but even here the professions had their own rooms or tables, and had hopes of one day having their special coffee-house.

But let us return to the *capuciner*, a *café au lait*, the colour of a Capucin's cowl, served in a small china cup. This, or a darker mixture, known as *Nuss*, was the after-dinner coffee, while at breakfast or in the late afternoon a larger glass goblet or china cup was served, the coffee being of any shade from "very light gold, please" to black, and taken with or without whipped cream.

At the first visit the customer's requirements were minutely described, but the coffee brought by the waiter might be sent back again and again, until the beverage offered was sufficiently near perfection, after which it was never again described as anything but "the usual." On the next appearance of the customer the waiter, who was henceforth called by his Christian name, brought the correct mixture, served in the proper way, "as your honour always pleases to take it."

A mistake was unthinkable, and if a guest should change his order, if the Count should ask for a "gold in goblet" when for the last five years he had never ordered anything but a "half-brown, in a medium cup with whipped cream," this was a certain symptom of serious illness or mental derangement, and an occasion for calling a conference in the kitchen, attended not only by the proprietor and the *piccolo*, but also by the head waiter, here known as the "cashier."

These "cashier-waiters" never served food or drink, and just as Kubelik was a virtuoso on the violin, so many a "cashier" was a virtuoso in his own profession. Their memory was fantastic, and a head waiter's knowledge of human nature could not be bettered. A quick, sidelong glance, and he knew in which of the many languages at his disposal he must address the new-comer, never failing to employ the correct one.

He gave his instructions to the waiter and the *piccolo*, a microscopic edition of a waiter's apprentice, and the latter then laid a pile of magazines and newspapers—English, French, Hungarian, German—on the chair beside the guest.

The "Cashier" always knew whether "His Lordship" wished to be entertained with small-talk, was anxious to obtain a few "good addresses," or wanted to be left alone.

When the moment for settling the bill arrived, there was a performance worthy of the finest traditions of the variety stage. After patiently listening to the customer's recital of items of food

and drink, the cashier murmured a figure, and on receiving a banknote or one of the larger coins of the realm, he made a few lightning dips into hidden pockets, and laid the handful of change, correct to the last half-farthing, on the table. This correctness, however, did not mean that there might not be several base coins among the change, or coins which had been out of circulation since Maria Theresa's days.

A real mistake would probably have led to the "cashier's" suicide, and such a thing was unknown in Continental history.

Tea? Only foreigners and invalids would ever drink tea! Such, at first sight, was the opinion of the coffee addict; but before long it became fashionable to drink tea, even if one were in the best of health, the habit having been imported by "snobs" who had treated themselves to a fortnight's Cook's tour to the British Isles, and for years afterwards interpolated English words into their German, Magyar or Czech speech.

They did not themselves like tea, but it looked so refined, and their colleagues were so annoyed when they saw it, or when the Anglophiles, to display their perfect English accent, ordered the *piccolo* to fetch the "Illustrated London News." Even if one did not understand the text, there were always the pictures, and the periodical was large enough to conceal one of the local smutty-joke papers, a practice which no one had discovered. It was obvious to the reader's friends that the English weekly must be extremely amusing, so they too asked the *piccolo* to bring it. As they could not discover anything amusing in its contents, they soon left such periodicals to foreigners and their imitators, returning to the press of their own country.

In the afternoon a great many ladies would visit the coffee-house, and they too preferred to patronise their own special establishment, or had separate rooms or tables. No one would have suspected, in the perfectly dressed gentlewoman, resplendent in her furs and jewels, the same person who a few hours earlier had been bullying a little barefooted general servant, or beating her carpets on the balcony, untidy and dishevelled, wearing an old dressing-gown (and the diamond earrings for safety's sake).

Heaped-up dishes of pastries were emptied, in spite of eternal slimming cures, and *Kipfl*, as the crescents or cornicles were called, were consumed in great quantities. This cornicle is a souvenir of the deliverance from the Turkish yoke, and was first produced by the Austrian bakers to celebrate their joy when the siege of Vienna was over, and the sign of the crescent moon had disappeared for good.

Mothers often brought their children, especially in summer, when the tables were set out on the sidewalk, under wide canvas

awnings, screened by long rows of potted trees and shrubs. Here they could watch the passers-by and, in the cities through which the Danube flowed, the typical life of the promenade or Corso, which had no parallel in western Europe.

This open-air fashion-show, which was also a marriage-market and a mild form of mass-exhibitionism, was in a way nothing other than a refined, perambulatory extension of the life of the coffee-house.

Bon ton required that in fine weather, on coming from one's office or leaving home, before retiring to the coffee-house, one should walk up and down the Corso several times, and then sit for a while on one of the chairs which were set out in long rows. Society observed this solemn rite with great regularity, and even here found ways and means of creating class-distinctions, by gravitating to certain parts of the Corso, from which unwanted elements were soon expelled by frozen looks and other mute expressions of distaste.

People would go short of food in order to dress well, and the art of preserving and resuscitating old garments, so that they had the appearance of new, was brought to a high degree of perfection. The discovery of these sartorial secrets delighted the malicious discoverer, and mortified the victim, who refused to admit that her frock was "that pink thing you had last year," now dyed blue and remodelled.

In spite of the glaring heat of the sun, only slightly tempered by blinds and awnings, the coffee-house routine followed its normal course. Perhaps a few more habitués would retire to the cooler card-rooms in the basements, for their not always harmless game, and there would not be so many shirt-sleeved players round the ping-pong or billiard tables. Feminine fashions would become semi-tropical, revealing more of the person; fans would appear, but otherwise there would be little difference.

Hot drinks were replaced by a great variety of ices and cooling beverages. "Does your Lordship command me to fetch an iced coffee?" But the guest protests; he is no member of the House of Peers, but only a newspaper correspondent, and he wants tea. "Cold, Herr chief editor?" No one connected with the press can be less than an editor, and as the customer's name is unknown, the waiter cannot ennoble him by using the "von" or "de" customary in coffee-house language, nor can he be sure that the title of baron would suit this particular foreigner.

The foreigner, proving that he is really British, orders hot tea, and before long admiring glances from the other tables watch the ceremony of hot-tea-drinking, when half the population is basking in the now tepid waves of the Danube or the fashionable bathing pools, in a shade temperature of 95°.

"Look! A genuine Englishman!" and the *piccolo* piles up all the British and American papers he can lay his hands on—within reach of the "editor," proudly informing him that he is attending evening classes in English on his day off.

But in spite of all these attentions, the journalist soon discovers that "his crowd," all the foreign newspaper correspondents, assemble in the "*Gigantic*," three houses further down, and that consequently he is in the wrong place here.

The "*Café Gigantic*" staff serve hot tea, and bring telegram forms without being specially asked for them, and there is something like a palace revolution when, a few days later, the thermometer having risen still further, the "new regular customer" takes the waiter aback by changing his order to one for iced chocolate.

Adopting the habits of the other newspaper correspondents, the "Herr chief editor" now arrives at "his" table the first thing in the morning, and remains in "his" coffee-house, with only a few interruptions, until late at night.

Here he collects information from his colleagues and the waiters, for news on its way hither outstrips the telegraph, and sensational items are "smelt" long before they become current rumours. Political changes, the great and minor tragedies of private and public life, or other important tidings are often anticipated by the "*Gigantic*" crowd, long before they actually happen. This is done by the ingenious combination of facts, the making of clever deductions, or sheer invention.

Why waste time by going to one's hotel or boarding house? The other correspondents write their stories here, and have them posted by the innocent-looking *piccolo*, or 'phoned to the cable office by "that nice telephone girl, who is always so helpful!"

But then one day the naïve correspondent realises that there must be some serious leakage somewhere, and the complaint of the real editor in far-away London, that the news which he sends is stale, is not quite unjustified. The "old man's" reproaches that his stories are published in the "*Daily Racket*" long before their own office receives them seem to have something in them.

He discovers, after a little investigation, and to his great surprise, that the nice telephone girl is even more obliging to others than she is to him, and that the harmless-looking *piccolo* sells the "Herr Chief Editor's" most treasured secrets to whosoever will pay for them.*

Evidently he must change his tactics, and as the local reporters assemble just across the road in the "*Café Grandiose*," he will in future look in there too, and tap a more immediate source of news, but he will jolly well keep the information so collected to himself.

The atmosphere in the "*Café Grandiose*" is less international,

more Danubian. The champions of the local press, representing all nationalities, creeds, parties and views, sit peacefully together, though this will not prevent them from abusing and condemning their friends in their several organs. But as their colleagues do the same all accounts are settled, and the general temper of the company is most cordial.

At first this Tower of Babel is a little bewildering to the foreigner. Everybody talks so loudly and gesticulates so wildly, grimacing with rolling eye-balls and blazing eyes, and as he does not understand the shouts he is always under the impression that a quarrel is in progress and that the killing will begin any moment.

But he will soon realise that all this is only so much psychological fireworks, harmless barks without bites, a matter of temperament and blood-heat. This lack of phlegm or restraint results from a different education, and while the hot weather makes the unaccustomed visitor apathetic and drowsy, it seems only to exacerbate the arguments of the natives and lend more fire to their discussions.

The stranger soon abandons his public school French and German, which, pronounced with an English accent, are of very little use to him, and discovers that his mother tongue is well understood by one and all. As is often the case with small nations, whose own language does not take them very far, most of the Danubians are excellent linguists, and can save their visitors the trouble of trying to make themselves understood in the tongue-twisting vernacular or by despairing pantomime.

When the correspondent's ear grows accustomed to the different tongues spoken around him they begin to lose their outlandish, almost savage sound, and he gradually learns to distinguish them.

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Within the Habsburg Dual Empire seventeen distinct languages were spoken, each of which was split into dozens of dialects and jargons.

Eight of these tongues belong to the Slavonic language family, four are Germanic or Indo-Germanic, three Latin or Romance, and two Mongolic, or, to be exact, Ural-Altaic; an inextricable mixture, most difficult to explain in a few words.

The Slavonic group, divided into North and South Slavonic, consists of Czech, a fairly similar Slovak, the less closely related Polish and Ruthenian, also known as Little-Russian; and then, slightly resembling each other, Serbian, Croatian, Slovenian, and finally Bulgarian. But these languages often become entangled, forming a new tongue; as, for example, the Serbo-Croat.

German, which was spoken in the territory later known as the Austrian Republic or in the German-language islands of Czecho-

Slovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia and Rumania, served as an army language for the Habsburgs, and was also used as an auxiliary means of communication by the intelligentsia, the business world, etc., all over the North, Central, and Eastern Europe. The Romany of the Gipsy derives from an Indo-Germanic source, and is consequently a distant relative of the German language, while Yiddish, so prevalent in the Polish parts of the Empire, is, by the irony of fate, also based on the Teutonic tongue, and has even retained more of its ancient sounds than the modern "Aryan" language. The fourth tongue in this family is Albanian, but this is only a very distant relative on the Indian side.

The Latin or Romance languages are spoken in the Alpine and Adriatic provinces, Italian in the South Tyrol, Istria, and Dalmatia, and Latin or Rhäto-Roman in some parts of the Austrian Alps, while Rumanian is spoken from Transylvania to the Black Sea. The Rumanians proudly advertise their direct descent from the Roman legions of the Emperor Trajan, not mentioning the fact that their country served the ancient Latins as a penal colony.

Magyar is a next-of-kin to Finnish, both being Finno-Ugrian, but the Hungarians and the Finns cannot understand each other, as the number of words identical in the two languages is negligible. They are cousins to Turkish, also quite frequent in the Balkans, all three being of Mongolian origin. Owing to the long Turkish occupation, some Turkish terms are found in Magyar, which at the same time employs quite a few Slavonic expressions.

What a confusion of tongues! Seventeen languages! The four corners of a village use different words to say the same thing, and do not understand one another. The foreigner quite rightly asks: "Can't you do something about it? Why don't you, for example, all speak German?"

German? The whole assembly turns into a hornet's nest. "What, German? . . . We Poles, Czechs, Magyars? . . . You don't know what you are talking about!"

"Well, then, agree on some other tongue; perhaps Volapük, or Esperanto, which is neutral!" But one soon discovers that there are many objections to artificial languages; they are learned only as a hobby by a few idealists, or they become an obsession to a small number of cranks. It would only add to the difficulties of school children, who have enough trouble to learn their mother tongue, plus German, and French, with ancient Greek and Latin. Besides, Esperanto is pronounced by British people in their own way, Frenchmen give it another individualistic flavour, and its whole purpose, which is simply to enable foreigners to understand each other, is lost.

The Englishman is much too modest to recommend the only

sensible course, the universal adoption of his own speech as an auxiliary language, spoken already as a mother tongue by over two hundred million human beings, and used as an expedient by several hundred million others. He is perhaps afraid that people might object to the complicated orthography, which could be so easily simplified, or the difficulties of pronunciation, which would offer no problem at all if a few more letters were added to the English alphabet.

To put an end to all this Babel-madness, to create a language-brotherhood of nations, who would understand one another in every sense of the word—is it really so impossible, a mere Utopian dream?

Millions of Danubians have emigrated to America, where they live, in the eyes of their kinsmen at home, in an Eldorado of prosperity and liberty. This has given an enormous impetus to the learning of English in troubled Central Europe. Many a parent has spent his last penny on fees to British tutors, in the hope that the ability to write in English to some relative or friend in the U.S.A. might ease the flow of dollars, or bring an invitation to come and share the wealth of the New World. The fact that the English language has spread over the globe as an almost incidental concomitant of sport, commerce, and dollar-worship, has perhaps obscured the tremendous energy with which it has been propagated throughout the world.

Some of the older emigrants paid only temporary visits to the United States, simply in order to make money, save up a certain number of dollars, and then return home to their native villages, speaking a strange mixture of their mother tongue and English, and becoming at the same time very active missionaries for Anglo-or Americo-mania.

The ground seemed well prepared, and even though the wireless, Hollywood, and the "talkie," these greatest of mediums for propagating the English tongue, still slept quietly in the womb of the future, the "Herr chief-editor" felt very strongly that somehow a great opportunity had been lost.

Everybody here was most helpful to him, not only because they could speak many languages, but because they all were much-travelled people, who seemed to know and understand everything; perhaps they did not go very deeply into the problems that interested him; often, perhaps, they were superficial; still, they had acquired a touch of all-round culture, and most of them were delightful conversationalists.

But their cosmopolitanism sometimes found expression in a kind of exhibitionism, a bombastic parade of knowledge, and round these little stone-slabbed tables sat a strange and motley intelligentsia.

At the same time, some of the most outstanding figures in

European art and literature had started here, had first seen their work in print in some provincial Danubian paper. Zweig, Karél Capek, Schnitzler, Ferenc Molnár . . . who can name them all? They all rose from this level, gathering their material in the coffee-house atmosphere, and by creating a certain school of literature they influenced modern thought in general.

Many creative ideas were born under the roof of the coffee-house, and some destructive ones as well. Revolutions were hatched, great business enterprises devised, even the sinister plans of criminals concocted here while the cashiers, waiters and piccolos hurried to and fro. A strange world, whose fur coats were often bought on the hire-purchase system, their jewels and dresses charged to accounts frequently overdue, their motor-cars paid for with bills that ran longer than the cars themselves.

Not only were the marble and gold on the coffee-house walls imitation, and the titles unauthentic—not only was the knowledge displayed in many cases bluff—but even the peoples accustomed to living this life became somehow slightly spurious in character.

The typical Central European mentality which had gradually matured in this atmosphere was a sort of spiritual cocktail; a petty-bourgeois provincialism, the ideas of the peasantry, a parody of aristocratic manners, and a Bohemian geniality, were the dominant ingredients, but certain Oriental influences and the contagion of modern Americanism had also helped to form it.

The Danubian was disgusted when he travelled abroad to find that only one tumbler of water, or even none at all, accompanied his coffee, and not, as at home, four, which were constantly replenished. It did not impress him to note that a Berliner invariably called the waiter "Herr Chief-Waiter" and not by his Christian name, or that the beverage served as "Mocha" was so weak that one could see through it the little flowers painted on the bottom of the cup. He may have forgiven the absence of the big piles of newspapers and magazines, but the fact that there was no one to talk to, no one to whom he could pour out his heart and discuss the topics of the day—that soon drove him back to the shores of the Danube.

The urge to rub shoulders with the public, to have one's finger on the pulse of the town, was so strong that even the high aristocracy and the Court circles needed a coffee-house. The "Dehmel" in Vienna, the "Gerbeaux" in Budapest, half *patisserie*, half coffee-house—in these public snuggeries, archdukes, generals, counts and barons mixed with financial magnates and lesser mortals, including members of the demi-monde. They had only one purpose in frequenting them; they wanted to talk, to hear the latest gossip, to air their own opinions, to argue and lay down the law.

CHAPTER X

THERESA RING

THE Emperor Francis Joseph was grievously worried. An influential new party had sprung up in the Austrian Parliament. Their leader, Karl Lueger, a general demagogue, had worked his way up from the greatest poverty.

He had found a new slogan—"Christian Socialism"; he professed himself the protector of the small men—artisans, shopkeepers, petty officials, members of the proletariat who by making a little money had become micro-capitalists. Lueger put Anti-semitism and the fight against social democracy on his programme, and, a zealous Catholic, endeavoured to capture the schools and universities for the Church.

He overthrew the Liberal municipal government, and became the uncrowned King of Vienna; and thanks to his tirades against the Jews, whom he hated on religious, not on racial grounds, the idol of the street.

To increase their influence, the Christian Socialists joined up with the pan-German, anti-Habsburg circles, and before long they had the uniformed student movement and the rest of the reactionary guard on their side. Most of them being mischief-makers of the worst type, they made a thorough nuisance of themselves in public and private life, to the great detriment of the Empire.

Their slogans were not new, apart from a few creations of Lueger's; for example, his famous saying: "It is for me to decide who is a Jew," which has been plagiarised by several of his disciples in recent years.

His success evoked a new wave of intolerance in Germany, where the old Emperor and his Chancellor, Bismarck, both typical Prussian feudal junkers, did nothing to check it. But the Crown Prince Frederick, strongly influenced by his father-in-law, the Prince Consort Albert, and his liberal ideas, publicly declared that the agitation was a shame and disgrace to Germany. He was, however, already a very sick man, who had little say in the government, and it became quite fashionable to be an Antisemite; indeed, in order to gain recognition by the "best people" one had to come out openly against the Jews and Social Democrats.

A book entitled *The Victory of Judaism over Germany*, written some years earlier by one Wilhelm Marr, a very sinister person, had a sudden renaissance; reprinted, it was sold in hundreds of thousands.

It became the reactionaries' Bible, the text-book of strategy for the cavalry of the Trojan horse.

In the year 1888 a strange historical phenomenon occurred, and German schoolchildren had to memorise "three eights, three Kaisers."

William I died on March 9, and Frederick III, at the age of 57, followed his father on the throne. Desperately ill, he lost his voice after a terrible operation, which could not, however, save the unhappy man's life.

In June Queen Victoria came to Berlin, to visit her dying son-in-law. For him death was a merciful release, when after a reign of only ninety-nine days his earthly career ended. He was a genuinely democratic, profoundly liberal-minded ruler, whose opinions and character were regarded in German court circles as notoriously un-Prussian.

Frederick III was strongly opposed to Bismarck and the war of 1866 against Austria; he took a great interest in the arts and sciences, and in history and archaeology. The excavations at Olympia and Pergamon were carried out at his instigation. It is difficult to imagine what would have been the fate of Europe if he had continued to rule the Empire instead of his son William II, who took the reins so soon from his father's hands.

The new Emperor walked to the throne with the dashing and elastic step which is traditional for youthful monarchs, and his arrogant voice soon silenced even the memory of his father's kindly whisper.

His parents had educated William II on sensible, perhaps almost too simple, lines. He had attended a middle-class secondary school in Cassel, sharing the normal middle-class life of his school-fellows.

His mother, who, convinced of the superiority of German culture, regarded Germany as a backward country, was swayed alternately by the Anglophile sympathies of his father and mother, and the conceited self-assertion of the new Teutonic Empire. But in the end the German influence was victorious, and the spirit of Prussianism, untouched by the Danubian Anglo-mania, strengthened his profound conviction that it was his divinely-appointed mission to rule the world.

When the waves of the Panama scandal, which had reached Central Europe from Paris, gave reaction an impetus comparable to that of the ill-famed Black Friday, the political atmosphere was freshly charged with intolerance.

William II, whom the arch Jew-baiter Pastor Stöcker found thoroughly accessible, did his best to place the enemies of progress

in power. They were recruited largely from imperialistic circles, who favoured the new Emperor's absolutist ideas and flattered him, knowing him to be vain as a peacock.

Francis Joseph was not impressed by the new ruler of the neighbour state; still less did Rudolf, the Austrian Crown Prince, love the Kaiser. He had soon penetrated the secrets of William's character, and profoundly disliked the Prussian in him.

The Archduke Rudolf had often visited William II's parents. They were very much to his taste; they cherished similar ideas, and had the same interests and hobbies. But with their eldest son he could never get on, and the photographs which showed the two future rulers smiling sweetly at each other had been taken only for propaganda purposes.

Rudolf's was a very strange character. Brought up in accordance with the Habsburg tradition, he had to go through a course of toughening in his early youth, which left profound traces on his sensitive mind. Francis Joseph agreed to a change of educational methods only when a catastrophe was foretold by the Court physicians, and the Empress put her foot down. Count Latour then became the Archduke's tutor; an aesthete and idealist, full of liberal and democratic notions which strongly influenced Rudolf, who had not only inherited his mother's artistic temperament but also, unfortunately, her tendency to melancholy.

The people of Vienna adored the Crown Prince, who mixed with them freely, going about like any ordinary citizen, cracking his jokes with the cab-drivers and flower-girls, and wearing the popular title of "the soldiers' friend" with greater pride than his Order of the Golden Fleece. Rudolf made no strict distinction between the "Court Ball" which the aristocracy regarded as a common affair, and the "Ball at Court," at which only the elect of the highest circles could appear. For him both were utterly boring events, but he loved the suburban dance-halls, and was interested in the amusements of simple people. There he found the real Viennese, the charming type of young Danubian womanhood, a happy mixture of Slavonic, Germanic and Oriental characteristics, with a dash of the Asiatic on a Roman basis. Gay, a little sentimental and romantic, a pleasant talker, with the superficial, all-round knowledge, so frequent in these regions, artistic, often sparkingly witty, but without sarcasm or arrogance, always womanly, and in spite of her strong sensuality, never losing her dignity.

The Crown Prince had no monkish leanings; he was rather inclined to the excesses characteristic of many of the Habsburgs. They were often unbalanced and lacking in self-control; defects inherited from their ancestors, who included Johanna the Mad. A brother of Francis Joseph, Ludwig Victor,

very

bad name in this respect ; his nephew Otto was notorious for more than his good looks ; a cousin, Leopold Ferdinand, rode about in women's clothes when not on duty ; while Nepomuk Salvator, afterwards known as Johann Orth, lived a most eccentric life. The signs of degeneration were evident in Rudolf also, who, the offspring of near relatives, both of the tainted Habsburg Wittelsbach lineage, came into this world with the curse of their heritage upon him !

His parents hoped that the Crown Prince would settle down when he had married the Princess Stephanie, the youngest daughter of Leopold of Belgium, a younger sister of the unhappy Empress of Mexico, who was at the same time Francis Joseph's sister-in-law. This match had been arranged by the Ambassador to the Court of Brussels, Count Bohuslav Chotek, a name which was fated to become peculiarly displeasing to the Imperial Court.

Unfortunately, however, matrimony did not change Rudolf's wild way of life, and one scandal followed another. Sternly reprimanded one day by Francis Joseph, the Crown Prince went to his hunting-lodge at Mayerling, near Vienna, where his servants found him dead next morning. He had shot himself and his latest mistress, the sixteen-year-old Baroness Vetsera.

His son's funeral was the sole occasion on which the Emperor Francis Joseph was seen to lose his self-control and shed tears in public. He bewailed not only his child, but the fate of the Habsburg Empire, which was sealed with the Crown Prince's death. The heir of the Habsburg crown took with him into the grave the future of their realm.

When the door of the Capucin crypt had closed, that door which had opened so often already in the Emperor's lifetime to receive the body of one he loved, he may have wondered for whom the Court Marshal would next knock three times with his wooden mallet, asking for entrance, in accordance with the Spanish rite.

This protocol made it impossible for the Empress Elizabeth to be present at her son's interment, nor could she hear the organ of the Capucin crypt, on which Saliery and Mozart had often played, for she was standing at a window of the Burg.

Always superstitious, and often laughed at by the Archduke Rudolf for her spiritualistic beliefs, she now found consolation in them. At the same time, the signs of pathological melancholia became more and more evident in the Empress, who now rarely appeared in public.

Her mad cousin Ludwig II of Bavaria required his servants and Court officials to scratch at the door and enter on all fours, like dogs, compelling them to wear masks, as he could not stand the sight of their faces. Elizabeth did not go as far as that, but she always held a fan before her face in the presence of others. She

spoke English, French, Italian, Hungarian and Greek fluently, besides her mother tongue, but now her former favourites—Byron, Heine, Petöfi and Homer—were laid aside, and she only read Hölderlin and Leopardi, the bards of death; the other poets she found too joyous.

The news of the ghastly tragedy went its rounds through the world's press; the heavy headlines, the inevitable comments, the speculations as to possible consequences, the insinuations of malevolent gossip, were intermingled with other items, advertisements, birth and obituary notices, and all sorts of private business and official announcements in the accustomed fashion of the Central European newspaper.

Local tidings are important for the small circle directly concerned, while international affairs interest the wider public only if they are sensational, arousing vibrations in the resonance-strings of the human mind, or stirring the savage blood-lust of the mob.

Accidents, fires, murders, are reported; then comes a laughable incident; and then—why, John marries Jane; you should drink Tuborg's lager; Mrs. Smith wishes to thank her many friends; Monsieur Eiffel, the French engineer, has constructed a steel tower a thousand feet high for the Paris World Exhibition of 1889, which so delighted Hungarian visitors that they ordered Eiffel to build the main railway station and the Margit Bridge in Budapest.

There must surely be a fine view from this altitude on a clear day . . . but only a glimpse of the present. The picture of the past moment has gone for ever, and the image of the future is not yet born. What one can see is *now*. As for the rest . . . all is speculation, or memories. For H. G. Wells's *Time Machine*—fortunately—still sleeps in the womb of the future; and J. B. Priestley's time-mixing plays are only amusing experiments in ink.

When I look up the file of *The Times* for 1889, to learn what London thought of the Habsburg tragedy, the type and the layout of the paper seem the same to me as those of the issue which was brought to my house this morning, by a boy merrily whistling as he rode his bicycle. So too seem the advertisements and announcements as I turn the pages. Date follows date; March, April . . . the 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th. . . . This date seems somehow familiar: did anything important happen on this April 20, 1889? Let me just see: it was an Easter Saturday. A great fire in New York is reported, the estimated loss is thirty million dollars. *Quarter* packet! The weather in London was *rainy*; no doubt the *people* about to leave town for their holidays were disappointed. Drury Lane, "The Babes in the Wood"; at the Globe *the*

"King Richard III"; at the Comedy, "Merry Margate" . . . quite appropriate for the holiday. . . . But why do I remember this date? There were riots in Vienna, a strike of tram conductors and drivers, disturbances in the Favouriten and Hernals districts. . . . Still, I could not have learned about them at school. . . . I once met a girl from Hernals, but not as far back as all that; not even her mother would have been born then . . . and suddenly it flashes like lightning through my brain; Hitler was born on that day, the madman who has plunged our world into fire and blood, the yelping, howling, murdering lunatic dictator, whose name has been printed oftener in our days than Napoleon's during the last one hundred and fifty years. . . . Hitler . . . and as I stand in the quiet, peaceful British Museum reading-room I close my eyes for a moment, overwhelmed by the word HITLER, and what it meant to our children and us in frightfulness. H. G. Wells's *Time Machine* comes again into my mind. One should try to travel back in thought to this date in April 1889. . . . A cheerful, old English gentleman sits in a big easy chair, in a comfortable breakfast-room, with all its Victorian bric-à-brac and paraphernalia, the velvet and chintz upholstery, the picture-frames, the vases, the thousand little dust-collecting articles, so awful to look at, so trying for the servants who have to clean them; a fire radiates a comfortable warmth, the Spring sun shines through the window . . . he has on his lap *The Times*, through which I have just glanced. . . . "Good morning." . . . "Are you not astonished that *The Times*, *THE TIMES* of all papers, has omitted this most important item of news? What news? That in Braunau this man has just been born! You do not know anything about Braunau? Well, it is a small town on the borders of Austria, a bridge there crosses the River Inn, and leads into Bavaria; there is a nice mediaeval-looking market-place, where in 1806 Herr Johannes Philip Palm, a Nuremberg bookseller, was executed by the order of Napoleon for distributing a pamphlet entitled *Germany in her Deepest Humiliation*, which the Bonaparte did not like. Since then nothing of any importance has happened in Braunau, apart from the incident to which I was referring, all mention of which is missing from this number of *The Times*; that in the Pommer Inn the twenty-nine-years-old Mrs. Clara Hitler, née Pölzl, has just borne a son to be named Adolf, to her husband, Alois Schicklgruber, aged fifty-two, alias Hitler. . . . You do not see the importance of the event, and think that the execution of Palm for the pamphlet on Germany's humiliation is more interesting? But I can assure you that the birth of the Hitler boy will have more to do with German humiliation than all the pamphlets and booksellers of the world put together, including the unfortunate Herr Palm. Who was this Alois

Schicklgruber? Only a petty official, an Austrian customs officer, one of the caste of whom Professor Redlich had said: "Bureaucratism is form without substance, appearance without reality, careful maintenance of appearances coupled with indifference towards results!" . . . You have heard of Redlich? You have read some of his books? Yes, he lived in your days. . . . What do I mean by "your days?" Oh, never mind, let's get back to Alois, who was an illegitimate child of Maria Ann Schicklgrüber, serving as a maid in the house of the Vienna Baron Rothschild, and sent back to her country home after becoming pregnant. Alois Schicklgruber married, when he grew up, three times, but as the mother of his last wife, Clara, did not like the name of Schicklgruber, he adopted, to please this mother-in-law, Frau Pölzl's maiden name, Hitler, which bears some resemblance to Hiedler, once mentioned to Alois as the name of one of his ancestors.

Clara Pölzl was twenty-three years younger than Schicklgruber-Hitler, who died when little Adolf was still quite young. . . . *The Times*? Oh, I am so sorry! I was just day-dreaming! Of course you can have the 1889 volume; I have finished with it. . . ."

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In March 1890 William II drops his pilot, the Iron Chancellor, Prince Bismarck. The Moor has done his duty, he may go! Both are ultra-reactionaries and imperialists, but master and servant could not agree in the means of reaching the same end.

Still, now that the younger and far less restrained of the two takes over, the world looks on with fear and misgiving. Consequently, while Gerhard Hauptmann's *The Weavers* calls attention to social evils, and Wedekind's *Spring's Awakening* shocks the theatre-going old maids of both sexes, behind the European scenes a Franco-Russian defensive alliance is quietly concluded. Commerce and industry flourish, the building trade is again very busy everywhere, the political horizon seems clear in this generally uneventful decade. This does not mean that the individual life is without its crises, that there is less illness, distress, and hunger in all parts of the world, or that there are no wars, and no causes of strife, but they are of the minor order and are consequently not much advertised in the Press. The human problems have not changed; underground a faint rumble indicates that the volcano is only resting, and that Mars is just having his after-dinner nap, preparing for the next meal.

The fur trade is excellent; my father is constantly travelling for his firm; he visits the Balkans and Turkey, Vienna and Prague, attends the Leipzig fair, and goes to Berlin to see one of his clients. "Come and have lunch with me at home to-morrow!"

Now he is sitting in a drawing-room, not very different from the

Victorian drawing-rooms, except for the huge tiled stove, which replaces the fireplace, and the old Kaiser's picture, in place of the Queen's.

"Mamma will be here any moment; please excuse her!" He does so with pleasure; the young lady with the long black plait and the dark, smiling eyes is surely more entertaining than a business friend's elderly wife.

She seems to like him, too, with his strange Francis Joseph beard, that looks so funny on a young face, his dreamy eyes, his deep voice, and his amusing Hungarian accent. . . . "A pity you have to return to Budapest so soon!"

His father is surprised that his junior partner should find it necessary to see this particular German client so often. So is the customer himself, until the day arrives when "Willi" stands before him, dressed in all the elegance of the period, to make the official request for the hand of the young lady in question. . . . "Oh, but we did not intend to let our daughter go abroad . . . after all, Hungary is so far away . . . the language . . . it is quite unexpected. . . ." Complications in Germany, troubles in the Balkans, tears, letters, secret diplomacy, repeated visits . . . and in the end the parents have to give in; and after a grand wedding, and a honeymoon in Italy, they are informed that their daughter Gertrude has safely arrived in the savage land of the Magyars.

There everything is strange; the language, of which one does not understand a word, the little servant-girls in picturesque costumes, barefooted, the houses with the queer balconies, Willi's friends, who talk so amusingly, and his parents, who regard the "foreign woman" with misgivings.

Am I to change my life to my mother-in-law's liking? No fear! To adapt myself to the country? There are plenty of Germans living in Budapest; it is quite easy to attach oneself to their circle. Why learn Magyar and assimilate myself to the Hungarians? Let them change their ways and come up to our level. . . . And as the Princess Royal felt a stranger in Berlin, finding the institutions of her own land greatly superior to those of her new home, so now my mother regarded Hungary as a backward country.

Still, she was very happy; my father made every concession; servants were engaged who spoke German, and all difficulties with the family were smoothed out. "It is only jealousy, my child; don't worry!" "They mean well, but they can't show it!" These were the customary domestic troubles all the world over; the guerilla warfare of relations, the hostilities of uncles and aunts; the battles fought out between kith and kin, from the North Pole to the South; the grim struggle to protect one's own flesh and blood against the intruders from without. . . .

My father, after inspecting the new marvel with that mixture of admiration and disgust so characteristic of the fathers of first-born children, hurries to his parents to report the event. He is convinced that everybody he meets must be able to divine what a miracle has just occurred, believing, as all parents do, that the occasion is unique, and the brat in question an outstanding specimen of *homo sapiens*.

Passing his "coffee-house," the Grand Cafe Edison, he cannot withstand the temptation to acquaint the proprietor, the cashier, the waiter, the piccolo, and a few friends, with the grand news, and he feels sorry for the barber, whose shop is naturally closed at this hour, because this unfortunate man will not hear the news until the morning. And, of course, the furriers' offices are closed; those who labour in them cannot guess that someone had just seen the light who will lift them all into the saddle of prosperity. At least, that is how my father saw it.

My memory is not as exceptional as that of some people, who are able to remember their earliest days, the period of pleasant, easy, animal rather than human life, when one is fed, and sleeps, and is fed again, falling asleep merely to wake and feed, a routine interrupted only by periodical baths, and other functions of a less agreeable nature.

My brain is just an ordinary brain, storing some events and pictures permanently, and registering others which fade out in the course of time, but most of them are only hiding for a while, to emerge again, evoked by quite unexpected causes.

Of my earliest youth I know nothing, it has completely vanished from this storehouse of thought, this *ganglion-frigidaire* of memories. But it often happens that one's parents have related certain incidents, one has seen certain photographs, and read something or other about this or that. In the course of one's life one confuses these stories and pictures with one's own memories, and believes them to be genuine recollections.

I glance through the notes which my father made, in his beautiful, symmetrical handwriting; I see that my weight was six pounds at birth, that I took my first steps on a certain date, that I had a lively character, and that on a certain date my teeth began to show. I look at my earliest photographs, and see how ugly I was, though I am sure my parents thought me as lovely as Raphael's angels. They are primitive snapshots, such as fathers always carry in their pocket-books, and show to hypocritical friends, who pretend to be greatly interested, and make the admiring noises expected of them.

I have very faint memories of the grey house in which I was born; of the flat, which was always dark in my recollections; there was a smell of paraffin lamps, for we had no gas; there were

huge doors, stairs with a stone banister, and a balcony with a wooden trellis to save my life. My mother may have pointed out this building to me in later years, but I have never entered it again, never found time in a long, busy life to revisit it. Why? I really do not know. But perhaps there would have been little sense in doing so; a new janitor, a different vice-concierge would have greeted me with his "I kiss your hand, Sir," and the people living in the flat formerly occupied by my parents would hardly understand the stranger's desire to pass through the rooms now filled with their furniture, with their life.

If you will just close your eyes for a moment, and try to turn the pages of your own history, you will be surprised to find how little comes back to your mind, even if you grope your way past such mental milestones as repeat themselves year by year, such as birthdays, Christmas Eves, or other holidays. Can you say how and where you spent them all?

Still more difficult it is, sitting in front of a typewriter, looking, as I do, out of the window, into the garden, at the huge old Kentish oak trees, the lovely English lawn, a blue sky, now littered with barrage balloons, to describe a time that is fifty years past, places thousands of miles away, thoughts long turned into thin air.

One may go through one's family albums, or one's collection of amusing old daguerreotypes, the primitive images of relatives in unnaturally forced poses, of frightened children with faces like plaster casts, conjuring up a vision of a perspiring photographer who tries in vain to make them smile, as they "watch for the dicky-bird!"

If one is fortunate enough to live with one's elders, with ancient aunts who are peripatetic information-bureaux, the question "Who is that fat chap?" may elicit some explanation, or even a long story. I am not in this fortunate position; I have to rely on a few notes, letters, and memories, a poor basis for a task of this magnitude. Memories sometimes return without apparent reason; names emerge, and pictures, some quite vivid, others less distinct, are conjured up by a whiff of scent, a chord of music, a combination of colours; but they are not dated and labelled, cannot be placed in a certain pigeon-hole or file. They are just tiny fragments, small tesserae of thought, which if cleverly put together would make the picture of my life. My father was a very reserved and quiet person, who rarely spoke of his own affairs, which may have seemed to him of small importance. He worked hard, and apart from his love for his family he was totally absorbed in his business. As I was very young when we parted I heard little from him, and when I saw him again it was only a few hours before his death. What he told my mother and others I learned only indirectly. . . .

One can look up the histories of the time in order to learn what was happening in the world when one was still toddling about and hanging on to one's mother's hand, one can even remember some of the events of those years of which we have recollections, one may have seen them mentioned in the newspapers, or depicted in the illustrated weeklies

I have discovered that when I was one year of age, and taking very little interest in world affairs, Louis Kossuth died in Turin. The Habsburgs had never forgiven him, but could not prevent the Magyars from bringing the ashes of their idol home, and giving him a funeral which has had few parallels in history. In the same year Japan attacked China. Well, history seems to run in circles, for this is very much what happened just recently, and something analogous to the Dreyfus trial, which was staged by the French reactionaries about the same time, was to be seen in Germany when the Nazis concocted a "Reichstag fire" trial

The details of this Dreyfus case, which had its roots in a swamp of corruption, in the militarism of *retanche*, clearly show that the instigators, working in a citadel of intolerance and egoism, had no other motives than those which were the mainspring of the convulsion which has produced such rats as Quisling and Lord Hawhaw, and the wholesale butchers of women and children of whom Europe is so full to-day

Major Esterházy, a member of the French branch of the family of Haydn's patron, did not forge documents merely in order to send the Jewish captain to jail, or for patriotic reasons—he did it in order to clear the ground for his own clique. While Zola, who fought for the liberation of Dreyfus, did so because he realised that a reactionary conspiracy of this type, the modern substitute for the accusation of blood guilt, was a danger to humanity in general, and to the progress of civilisation

The cry of the Paris mob, "A mort, à mort les juifs!" which was heard on the threshold of the twentieth century, the cry of those who would kill all Jews, for a crime which had not even been committed by one of them, was just as illogically insane as were the human torches which burned in Roman arenas, the *autos-da-fé* of the Inquisition, or the swastikas painted on London pavements during a life and death struggle with Nazi Germany

Nothing is new on this earth. In 1894 Armenians were massacred by the Turks, a few decades later Germans were massacring Russians, Poles, Czechs and Jews

I was taken on my first visit to Germany at the age of one, when my maternal grandmother died under tragic circumstances. A year later (December 1895) my father lost his father. For Max Weiss, who was born in the days of post-chaises, and who lived

to hear of Marconi's invention, a Danube steamer always represented a miracle, and the telephone, which my father had installed in their joint office, a device of the devil. I have often heard the story how my grandfather, after having the apparatus explained to him in detail, lifted the receiver, and without any preliminaries, or waiting for the exchange, shouted into it: "Can you hear me, Jetty?" As there came no immediate reply, he declared the whole thing a swindle and a waste of money.

At this time a promising career as a child prodigy was abruptly terminated, when the tragedy of Samson, who was robbed of his powers by a pair of shears, was repeated in my case with clippers; and my musical gifts were swept, together with my golden curls, into a barber's dustpan.

I had shown evidence of musical talent, not only by constantly hammering the keyboard of the piano with my fists and the heavier kinds of toys, but also by cracking open my father's valuable violin with a toy drumstick; perhaps only because I wanted to find out the name of the maker.

The terrible outrage upon my beauty was perpetrated by my mother's brother, Uncle Martin, who considered my long hair unmanly and disgusting, and sneaked off with me one afternoon to the barber's, whence I emerged screaming and disgraced.

This treacherous deed not only ruined my appearance, and put an end to my musical performances; it also filled me with such a horror of barbers' shops that for years I made a wide circuit on passing them. It was not until much later that I discovered the great educational value of Figaro's establishment. Not only was I enabled to listen to the unrestrained talk of grown-ups, while I waited my turn; I could also read there periodicals of a kind strictly tabu at home.

In my youth the continental barber had not yet learned how to extract high fees by the modern methods of permanent waving; he had to rely on his skill with the razor, scissors, and curling tongs; he also drew teeth, and functioned as a primitive surgeon, a petty bookmaker, and proprietor of a social club for the less wealthy citizens, where his customers could discuss the affairs of the day while their moustaches assumed the desired shape under their bandages.

When my parents tried in later years to revive my musical talents with the aid of music masters and mistresses the result was entirely discouraging. One of the unfortunates who had to eke out a living by giving music lessons—Paul Redl—became a conductor of the Vienna Opera, in spite of his experiences with me, which would have landed anyone with normal nerves in the ~~Döbling~~ asylum.

The horse tram still existed then in Budapest, the driver violently ringing a huge bell, the conductor merrily blowing his horn, and the whole jolting contraption moving with more noise than speed. But already several electric railways were running, and many omnibuses which were drawn by real horse power. The electric tube railway, the second in Europe after the London line from Stockwell to Southwark, had just made its trial runs, to become one of the greatest attractions of the coming Millennial Exhibition.

At this time, only two houses from us, in Number 24 Theresa Ring, a director of the *Pesti Naplo*, a Budapest newspaper, was living with his family, one son and two daughters, in a first floor flat above the Café Edison. We did not know each other, and could not divine what an important role we should one day play in each other's lives. They had their own circle, consisting mostly of artists and writers, and we ours, rather more in the economic line.

I had somehow inherited my mother's dislike for the greeting, "I kiss your hand," and whenever we went to visit my father's relatives or friends, threats and promises and cajolery had to be employed, and sweets offered me, in order to make me mumble these words. The presents which grandmother brought me after her visits to Carlsbad and elsewhere, I graciously accepted, but I was under the impression that one "I kiss your hand" on meeting her sufficed for the occasion, and under no circumstances could I be bullied into repeating the performance.

The "Millennium" celebrating the Magyar's entry into Hungary in A.D. 996 is the first event that I really remember. The Tube, with its coloured signals, the conductors' shouts, the strange, musty air, the sudden change from darkness to daylight when one reached a certain point, made a very great impression on me, and never lost its power to thrill. The Millennial Exhibition and the "Old Buda" amusement park, so familiar to the contemporary *jeunesse dorée*, and to elderly gentlemen unwilling to admit their years, were opened by the Emperor and Empress. But while Francis Joseph took a real interest in all such ceremonies, and was deeply touched by the ovations which he received, Elizabeth remained apathetic. Like a beautiful statue in her black Hungarian gala costume, she was a heart-breaking sight for the people who so adored her, it was obvious to them that her indifference was due to a now pathological melancholia.

As was always the case in the lives of these two people, who seemed to be persecuted by Fate, sorrow soon followed on the heels of joy. The festivities had to be interrupted, for the sudden death of his brother Charles Ludwig recalled Francis Joseph to Vienna.

But while the Habsburgs had cause for mourning in the death



TYPICAL INNER COURTYARD, BUDAPEST



EASTER MONDAY IN HUNGARY

of only one member of the family, their Italian ally suffered a more grievous blow in the defeat of Paratiere's army at Adowa in Abyssinia.

I must confess that the thought of this battle gives me great satisfaction, and I could wish that a similar humiliation had befallen the ruler of the third member of the Triple Alliance, William II, who two months earlier had addressed his tactless telegram to President Paul Kruger.

William II was an eloquent orator, but he never knew when to end a speech, or lay down the pen. His nickname, "Willy the Twaddler," less known than others abroad, was a great source of amusement to the Berliners.

One of the stories told in this connection relates to a labourer who had been overheard by a policeman while making use of various derogatory terms, including the word "twaddler." Taken to police headquarters, and sternly reprimanded for applying such language to his sovereign, the man had vigorously protested that he had neither mentioned the Emperor, nor had he been thinking of him; he had been referring to the King of Ruritania. This explanation elicited from the examining magistrate the petulant query: "What? Is he too such a twaddler?"

It was about this time that names began to appear in the Press which were soon to gain world-wide fame. Tirpitz was appointed the German Secretary for the Navy; Count Zeppelin invented his airship, and radium was discovered by the Curies.

When my sister was born—she was only a miniature edition of a baby, but she nearly cost our mother's life—we were about to move into a larger flat, 82 Király utca, an address which sounds very exotic and fashionable, but which is only the Magyar for King Street. At the same time, as though Fate had been in one of her more playful moods, new tenants were moving into Number 85, a house opposite ours: the Fischer family, who had been our neighbours on the Theresa Ring. But as yet we were not acquainted.

My grandmother had died in the meantime, and as my father had been keeping on the old offices only for her sake, and for sentimental reasons, the firm also now moved into new premises. To the great regret of all the employees, the Elizabeth Promenade, with its sparrows, its military band, and last, but not least, its picturesque maidens, was left behind. The windows of the new offices at No. 9 Charles Ring, just opposite the old Budapest town hall, opened into a passage where little could be seen or heard. Consequently, in the absence of anything better, the salesmen had now to concentrate on such matters as furs, customers, and other things even less interesting.

Bismarck's death, and Mr. Joseph Chamberlain's proposal of an

Anglo German alliance, provided the Press with plenty of material during this summer of 1898, and a few months later the world was shocked by the tragic death of the Empress Elizabeth, who was murdered by an Italian anarchist, Luccheni, in Geneva.

I can still vividly remember this event, which made a very deep impression on me, in spite of the fact that I was only five years of age. The candle illuminated windows, long vistas of the street lamps, the endless rows of black flags, the Empress's portraits, draped with mourning crepe, greatly stirred me and remained unforgettable. Everywhere, when I looked down from our balcony, I saw groups of people dressed in black, many of the women crying. The Magyars mourned their Queen in earnest. Not only had she shared their joys and sorrows, not only had she understood the Hungarian language, and felt with the Hungarian people, but she had brought liberation to them.

All hearts now turned to Francis Joseph. The old feelings of hostility were forgotten, the people saw in the Emperor simply a pitiable, lonely man, whose life must have become a burden to him. What had it, in reality, brought to the ageing ruler?

He had known an imperious mother, the duties and responsibilities of his position had fallen upon his shoulders when he was very young, his wife had loved horses more than she cared for him, and being always afraid of growing stout, she had indulged in walks of immoderate length, or had starved herself until she fell ill. Unsociable to the verge of insanity, Elizabeth spent more of her life abroad than in her family circle. His son, who had seemed to the Emperor half crazy or at least insanely obstinate, had committed suicide, without the slightest consideration for his country's future, or the happiness of his wife and child. Then there was a whole tribe of troublesome relatives, who brought only disgrace upon the Habsburg name. Among them was the new heir, Francis Ferdinand, who was said to be consumptive, he was always raising difficulties, without understanding for the Emperor's policies. He had just married, against the Emperor's wishes, a Countess Chotek, the daughter of the man responsible for Rudolf's unhappy match. And always, everywhere, political troubles and national hatreds, it was as though a curse had followed him throughout his career.

People began to love the old man, and even to tolerate his little affair with the buxom actress, whom Elizabeth had introduced to him with a quite definite purpose. The people knew that Catharina Schrait was always tactful, that she understood how to manage the Emperor, and that she was the only person in his circle, beside his young grandchildren, who really treated him as a human being.

CHAPTER XI

OOM PAUL'S SHIRT

IN our new flat we had gaslight. A great attraction! But still more important, a balcony! And in spite of the unfortunate circumstance that my family was numbered among the "front stair people," I was received into the clan of the other children, and was allowed to take part in their perilous games. "British *versus* Boers" was then a game of topical interest, and I, as among the youngest of the children, had often to accept the most uninteresting part; I had to sit, in an armchair, with cotton-wool whiskers under my chin, representing "Oom Paul Kruger." Or, as a victim of Red Indians, I was tied for hours to the pole supporting a washing-line, while the others devoured my sandwiches, sweets, or apples.

Still, in spite of my tender years, I was never caught breaking windows, or collecting supplies of putty, which we deftly removed from the edges of the newly-fitted panes. This procedure not only provided us with ammunition for our pea-shooters, but it saved a lot of trouble, as the panes fell out of their frames of their own accord, and were shattered.

In order to keep me out of temptation, and to give my sister the benefit of sunshine and fresh air, our mother generally took us to the Zoo. There she settled down with the pram, and a book or needlework, under one of the lovely chestnut trees, while I, who knew all animals and keepers by their "Christian names," had a glorious time, which usually ended in some damage to my skin, or my clothes.

It would take too long to describe all my adventures. I was kicked by donkeys, bitten by dogs, scratched by monkeys and cats. A dromedary made a meal of my new straw hat; a llama disliked my face and expressed its disgust by directing its saliva into my eyes; hyaenas and other animals found quite unexpected ways of disgracing me, but I still loved the place, and the lump sugar continued to disappear from our pantry, to find its way into the digestive system of "Jonás" the hippopotamus, or that of the elephants.

As the sad moment drew near when I should have to enter school, which was compulsory at the age of six in Central Europe, a family conference decided that I was much too weak and delicate for ordinary methods of education. My mother's tears extracted a medical certificate from our doctor, which enabled her darling to stay at home and indulge in the more pleasant way of accumulating

knowledge from a private tutor. This meant that one was exposed to the company of "those terrible children" only when sitting for examinations, at the end of the school year, in a regular school. This was quite a common practice in Danubian countries in circles which regarded themselves as belonging to the "better" classes of society, especially during the first few years of school age; fortunately it was much more difficult of application when the children became older.

To be counted as belonging to the "better" class meant in actual fact very little; it was easy enough to become "your honour" or "my gracious lady," and the Danubian ideas of what constituted wealth would have astonished the Western European.

A basic difference between the British and Central European educational systems lay in the State supervision to which every Danubian school was subject, and the fundamental curriculum prescribed by the Government for all educational institutes without exception. No school, therefore, whether privately owned or belonging to a religious community or other body, could provide a better or worse education than the State or municipal schools. These were very cheap, and in some cases no fees were charged. This eliminated the importance of the parents' financial situation, and to some extent abolished social distinctions.

Owing to the competition of these very efficient and inexpensive State and council schools, it was hardly worth while to run private schools, since they had great difficulty in finding pupils, while the more snobbish parents did not consider that even these more expensive schools could be relied upon to protect their darlings against infection, vermin, bad manners, and sexual information. They kept their children at home under private tutors, while the rest of the younger generation had the benefit of a very sensible education.

The question of a vulgar accent, so important in Britain, did not often arise, as a slight touch of peasant dialect was quite fashionable, and as a result of the more uniform system of education all classes spoke more or less in the same manner.

Another difference between the British and Central European system of education was the almost complete absence of boarding-schools, resulting partly from generally poor financial conditions, but mainly from a still very patriarchal way of living.

Parents were reluctant to part with their children even during lunch hours, as the constant society of the "kiddies" formed the most essential feature of their lives. Moreover, in agricultural

Even though such motives were less operative in the towns, the Central European was much more sentimental than the Briton, and more unwilling to part with his children or to break up the family; a matter, perhaps, of training, for he was not accustomed to seeing his friends and relatives go abroad for longer or shorter periods, almost a matter of routine for the British people, with their far-flung dominions and colonies. One tried to delay the break-up of the family circle as long as possible; it happened early enough in the eyes of Central European parents when the children married, or when the sons were called up for their term of military duty, which, owing to the system of conscription, was inevitable even in peace time.

As kindergartens and nursery schools were not much in favour, the children usually began their education at the age of six, in an elementary school, where they could remain until they reached the age of fourteen. But the majority of the pupils left after four years' training to enter a secondary school.

The most general form of secondary education lasted for eight years, and was in a gymnasium or *Realschule*.

The word gymnasium does not indicate a school for training the body, as in ancient Greece, but one providing a higher class of humanistic education, designed to inculcate mental discipline and agility of thought (mental gymnastics), the main emphasis being laid on classical subjects—on Greek, Latin, and literature, as in the British public- or grammar-schools—the education given in these schools being more especially designed for pupils whose knowledge of Latin would be of importance to them in their future career; as in medicine, the law, theology, and certain branches of the teaching profession.

The *Realschule* was concerned rather with the practical side of life, teaching modern languages, mathematics, geometry, physics, and other sciences, to boys who might become architects, chemists, or engineers, or who intended to complete their scientific education at a university or technical college.

Both types of education, however, led up to the *abiturium*, an examination equal to that for the British Higher School Certificate; but the distinction between the gymnasia and the *Realschule* has been eliminated in recent years by their amalgamation into *Realgymnasien*, embodying the principle of multi-lateral education under one roof, now recommended by many educationalists; while at the same time co-education became increasingly the fashion all over Central Europe.

Other types of interim schools, which did not prepare pupils for the university, but corresponded more or less with the L.C.C. Central Schools, the lower grade of technical institutes, training colleges

for elementary school teachers, etc., were also very abundant, but were all run on the same principles as the gymnasium or *Realschule*. In the schools the playing of games was not insisted upon as an effective means of character-training, the school being regarded merely as an instrument for imparting scholastic knowledge, while in all other respects the instruction, education and upbringing of the child was left to the parental home.

There is no doubt that the over-riding influence of the State, by eliminating unhealthy social differences, and affording the same chance to rich and to poor, offered great advantages, but at the same time it harboured grave dangers. This is obvious, for example, in the case of Nazi Germany, where as a result of this system the minds of the nation's youth fell unresisting into the hands of a dictator, who could impress his degenerate views upon their souls, and bring about a militarisation of the child's mental life unparalleled under any other educational system.

But whatever the system of education, one fundamental point of similarity obtains all the world over: it is always the older generation that teaches the younger—or, shall we say, nearly always? In this we may perceive a useful brake, to check changes too radical, even at the risk of congealing our ideas and impeding progress.

The Danubian University is not very different from the *alma mater* of other countries, except for a few minor points of tradition, and, once again, the total absence of the boarding system. Undergraduates, who were often very poor, were glad to avail themselves of the opportunity of employment as private tutors; not only for the sake of the very modest salary offered, but because the meals which these unhappy young men were offered in many cases at the table of the pupils' parents, as part of their remuneration, were often enough all that kept them alive.

For this pitiful reward the "Herr Professor," as he was called in this land of exaggerations, had not only to display superhuman patience and indulgence while teaching the spoilt urchin, but he had also to make himself useful to the family in a dozen different ways. He was expected to be a walking encyclopædia; to court the lady of the house or her elder daughters; to chaperone the younger ones; and to play cards with "the gentlemen." Most of these students were too bashful to disclose their real financial status, and I remember one who, in the bitter Danubian winter, went about in a shabby blazer until my father discovered the fact and gave him an old winter coat. The miseries of these boys, until they reached their goal, were indescribable; yet an academic career seemed an El Dorado to them and their peasant parents. Their vacations were often enough spent in sanatoria for consumptives, or working as semi-slaves on one of the great estates.

To receive a regular invitation to dine with the family on Sundays, to join the family circle in the evening, without being expected to do anything in return, especially in a cultured household, was the *ne plus ultra* of good fortune. Many a great scientist who afterwards became world-famous began his career in this way, and the privilege of bequeathing one's regular "day" at the table of a considerate host to one of the younger students, after graduating, meant much to the "testator" as well as to the fortunate successor.

Mr. Ligeti, who taught me my ABC, was to my childish imagination the embodiment of omniscience; but when I had proved to my parents that I was able, in spite of private tuition, to catch measles, mumps, and chicken-pox, with unpleasant complications, all within six months, I was sent to an ordinary school. I may have lost, in the course of the years, the illusion that my first teacher knew everything, but never the belief that Mr. Ligeti was one of the finest men I have ever met.

The "Heart Street Municipal Elementary School for Boys" opened my eyes in several respects. Our masters managed to drill quite a lot of information into our heads, but the boy who sat at my elbow, a dustman's son, taught me things that the masters did not know.

I learned from him that it is possible at the age of seven, to get up at dawn, to act as the understudy of a vice-concierge, and to work after school until midnight, and that it is apparently not absolutely necessary for a human body to absorb a meal each day.

When at home I made some disparaging remarks regarding his parents, my mother reprimanded me strongly, only to elicit the strange statement: "I know that most dustmen are rich and respectable, but this one seems to be an exception!"

I began now to divert my allocations of sugar from the Zoo to the vice-concierge's understudy, who, in consideration for this service, shattered the illusion that storks can carry elephant-babies, planted in my innocent mind the first doubts as to the miraculous arrival of Christmas presents, and awakened my suspicions regarding the Easter-egg-laying faculties of hares and rabbits. But all this did me little harm, and saved me from some bitter disillusionings in later years.

Life now began to lose its even flow. There were school timetables to be observed, interrupted by leisurely Sundays; unpleasant morning lessons were followed by delightful afternoons; examinations were succeeded by vacations. Some hours of the day were enjoyable, others were less agreeable; some days were utterly detestable, or variable in quality. Wednesday always began abominably, with mathematics and grammar, but then at lunch-time "the papers" awaited me at home—a batch of illustrated

magazines and "comics," delivered by messengers on a lending system, and changed once a week on Wednesdays.

Seen through the snap-shot windows of the periodicals, the world passed before my eyes in pictured fragments, small sections of life, vignettes of happiness and sorrow. I observed from these illustrations that two parallel worlds seemed to exist simultaneously: one the quiet, safe, eventless world of my parents' house, and the other a hotch-potch of terrible happenings—war, murder, tragedy, and sudden death.

I was still too young to realise that the magazines created a totally false impression by concentrating on sensational and gruesome items, and that millions of other homes were just as calm, secure, and ordinary as ours, giving the inmates at least the illusion of invulnerability.

But I felt also, without being able to define it more clearly, that something in the world was utterly wrong. Here, in an illustrated periodical, I saw how, at the first Hague Peace Conference, Kings and Presidents were clasping hands and embracing one another in friendship, while a few pages further on were the most horrible sketches of the Boer War and the Boxer rising. Or I could admire a portrait of Professor Ernst Haeckel, with a volume of *The Riddle of the Universe* in his hand, and next to this peaceful scientist, was a photograph of his Emperor, William II, delivering his notorious "Hun address" in Bremerhaven.

There were only illustrations relating to the Hilsner case, which occurred in the Bohemian Polna, a parallel to the sinister Tisza Eszlár ritual murder case. But as in the Magyar lawsuit, the whole conspiracy was exposed. Thomas Masaryk, then professor of philosophy in the university of Prague, took great pains to prove that this accusation of blood-guilt was unworthy of a modern State, thereby making many enemies in Pan-German and clerical circles. It is astonishing that Masaryk, who came from an environment in which Antisemitism was so prevalent, had absolutely escaped the infection, and became one of the most liberal-minded men in Central Europe.

In spite of all this enlightenment, I clung to many of my most primitive and childish ideas. I had somehow acquired the impression that on New Year's Eve, 1900, the transition from one century to another would be accompanied by extraordinary natural phenomena, and was greatly disappointed when on creeping to the window at midnight, my parents being away at a party, I could see only a gang of workmen shovelling the snow, quite unperturbed, the trams running as usual, and a bored policeman standing at the corner, apparently oblivious to the pealing of the church bells.

A new stamp-collection produced a curious change in my out-

look on life, for I now began to be greatly interested in the more morbid items of news, regarding all events from a philatelic angle. The death of Oscar Wilde, whose fairy-tales I had loved so much, and who was taken far more seriously on the Continent than in Britain, left me as cold as did the funeral of Johann Strauss the Second, deeply as he was mourned in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, for the simple reason that the death of these celebrities did not mean the issue of new "editions" for my collection. But the extermination of the royal house of Obrenovich by the Kara-georgeviches in Belgrade; King Humbert's assassination; the murder of President McKinley; and even the peaceful death of Queen Victoria, filled my heart with joyful anticipation of new treasures for my album. I need hardly mention the healthy effect these events had on the school "swap-market."

Pictures, photographs and sketches formed a continuous chain. Life seemed somehow to be running on endless ribbons; human destinies went rushing along the rails like so many little trains, bumping over sleepers and points, suddenly swerving aside on to a new track, safely switching past or crashing into one another.

Our first ten years are less completely dominated by school; they seem rather one long, playful day; but already one seems to be waiting for something that never happens. On Thursday one does this, on Friday afternoon that; everything happens according to a fixed plan; Christmas and birthday parties are all arranged well ahead of the date; in summer one wears white clothes, in winter, dark; apartments for our holidays are booked six months beforehand; and mother is obsessed by certain fixed convictions; that drawing-room settees have to be covered in spring, carpets and furs smothered with naphthaline when summer arrives, and a definite number of jars of fruit preserved in July; while unless a hundred-weight of tomatoes were bottled the world would come out of gear. Complications are never taken into account; a fire-engine may go roaring down the street, an ambulance may dash past, but they are always bound for someone else's house, while wars can be fought only in countries far away. There are sometimes unpleasant moments at the dentist's, tragedy seems to lurk behind the door in a specialist's waiting-room; it is difficult to climb the stairs with a bad school report in one's pocket; but one's troubles are soon forgotten; this day—June 29—is also the date of our departure, when the real vacations begin, and we go abroad for two months, to the Baltic coast or the Bavarian mountains. . . .

The trains are packed, especially the local ones, while ours, being a long-distance express, is more exclusive; and this gives me, even at my tender age, an unhealthy, snobbish feeling of superiority. Father, who rarely comes with us, has to remain in dusty, hot

Budapest to look after his business; he stands smiling under the carriage window. He is very quiet; but he is never a great talker. "Have a good time, children; write often! Yes, I will give the canary, for the time being, to the concierge and his wife. . . ." The engine starts; all is noise, commotion, excitement. Smoky suburbs, and little villages; endless plains, with corn and maize; a long bridge over the Danube; a roaring tunnel. "Let's eat up our sandwiches!" someone suggests. "When do we get there?" A thousand questions are asked, but no one waits for the answers. . . .

The journey ends, perhaps, at Berchtesgaden, still a very reputable place; no mountain fortress, no bronze eagle's eyrie. "That man" is probably a schoolboy in Linz, drawing with chalk on walls and fences. Only the summer guests and visitors are here now, and the picturesque Bavarian peasants; the hotels have that typical holiday smell of moist table-linen, cooking food, pitch-pine furniture, and the breath of the pine forests. . . . Or again, here is a German North Sea watering-place; a vision of endless beaches, sand-castles, and fluttering flags; full of noisy, arrogant people, unpleasant, bullying children; smelling of smoked fish, sausages, and bad coffee; one suffers from painful sunburns and upset tummies, and one makes new friends.

In the spring of 1903 father is ailing; to save him a bus journey we move nearer to his office. Wesselényi utca 4 is a "rent-palace"; very modern, with electric light, and a strange concierge, regarded with great suspicion by us children, who are now sent to "better" schools. But otherwise not much is changed; the balcony is wide enough for football, but there is too much glass about, and fewer playfellows. . . .

"This summer we shall go to Carinthia. . . ." To Millstadt on the Lake; here are green hills, a blue sky, a small swimming-bath, boats, a smell of lake-water, and a lovely view from our window. "Don't fall into the lake!" . . . There are only a few people in the house; on the top floor another Budapest family—two girls and a boy. "These Hungarians are everywhere!" my mother complains; but she is soon on good terms with the parents, though we youngsters still look askance at the other children and avoid them. Piles of newspapers arrive for the family on the second floor. I see by the headlines that Pope Leo XIII is dead. The news leaves me unmoved; the Vatican does not issue postage stamps. . . .

My sister and I pretend that we are not interested in the games of the other children. Rude remarks are made, meant to be overheard. "We aren't going to play with those awful children!" Still, our clowning is somehow intended to attract their attention, and one rainy day, when we keep on complaining—"What can we

do in this rotten hall, Mother?"—we are introduced to one another by our respective parents. "Now go and play at something or other together!" No doubt our elders want to talk politics, or discuss Schnitzler's *Reigen*, which has recently shocked the reading public.

"Quartet?" "No fear!" "Snap?" "No, we'd rather play 'Old Maid.'" Our shrieks of laughter soon attract the other boy, who is a little older than the rest of the children, and feels that it is rather beneath his dignity to play with us, but he soon joins us, and before the sun sets we are already old friends, pestering our parents to sit at the same table at meals. "What is your father's name?"—"Fischer."—"Where do you live in Budapest?"—"Király utca 85."—"How funny, we used to live opposite!"

Well, it is just Fate; you can't fool her; you can move from Theresa Ring to Király utca, and settle down in a new flat, but if you have to meet you will meet, whether in Budapest or in Carinthia; it is written in the stars.

We now travelled together, making a trip to Toblach in the Tyrol. "Are all these your family, Herr Director? Five children and the two ladies?"—"No; we are, in a way, two families. . . ." Here are Monte Piano, Cima di Lavaredo. . . . Look, there are the Tyrolean Rifles, high up on that precipice. . . . And then, Cortina, Misurina; friendly little inns, with smiling Italian waitresses; officers of three nations of the "Dreibund"¹ mingle together; a miniature, peaceful Babel; no passports, no formalities . . . what a Paradise!

On the way home we learn that there is great excitement in Vienna; King Edward VII has come from Carlsbad on a few days' visit to Francis Joseph; the jovial king is all smiles, the capital is wild with enthusiasm, in the grip of an access of Anglomania.

At home, Father has a great surprise for us; the "Informaphone" has been installed, an ancestral form of our modern broadcasting; one can listen on two earphones to news-talks and concerts, transmitted over the telephone wires from a central exchange; or even to the opera, or gypsy music from a coffee-house, or a "child's hour" from a studio. A programme of entertainment by telephone; at that time, to the best of my belief, the only one in the world. And now a desperate struggle begins between my sister and myself. "Mother, she has had it for hours!" . . . I listen just for a few minutes?"

Like everything else in Danubia, the cinema has its place in a coffee-house; the bioscope is installed for the

¹ The tripartite pact, a phrase used only of the one between Germany and Italy.

of the customers. It is still very primitive; the films keep on breaking, and the pictures are blurred and flickering, with spots of light streaking across them. Our maids are quite excited when they come home from their "evenings off"; full of praise and admiration for the new wonder. They tell us how on these moving pictures one can see a sausage cutting itself into slices, flowers opening and blooming, and funny men chasing each other. . . . But the greatest attraction seems to be the fact, which they cannot mention without giggling, that all this happens in pitch darkness!

Events that one could only vaguely imagine have now acquired a new reality; they are suddenly brought much closer to us. Formerly we had to be content with a crude illustration, a crackling record, reproduced on a primitive phonograph.

Now, at the cost of a few pence, from a comfortable armchair, we can watch the bustling traffic of a distant capital, or a great monarch's funeral, or the coronation of a new king. We can hear Caruso's very voice, a clear, direct transmission, coming over a wire from the Budapest Opera House, while we, at the other end of the line, are quietly enjoying our dinner, or even resting in bed. What colossal progress of human science, what a gigantic step toward a peaceful Utopia! We can actually watch the Wright brothers remaining in the air for three full minutes in their flying-machine. The old dream of Icarus has come true; the dream of bird-men, long envisaged by our ancestors. Such a flying machine was designed by Leonardo da Vinci four hundred years ago, this apparatus differs from his only in one respect; Wright's machine can rise into the blue sky and come down safe and sound, while the Italian artist's invention remained a dream. Don't you believe that the Wrights can really fly? Well, go to the Bioscope and see!

At school we can think of nothing else; we risk our limbs and our necks by trying out the new idea in our playground, with a combination of umbrellas, deck chairs, and other unsuitable contraptions.

Life has become much easier, nowadays one needn't stand in the rain, waiting for the "latest edition"; for all important Press telegrams are read out on the Informaphone. We hear that the Russo-Japanese War has broken out; also that Krupp & Co. have been transformed into a limited liability company, and that the Entente Cordiale was concluded between Great Britain and France on April 8, 1904, both amalgamations, no doubt, being inspired by humanitarian motives. The news is followed by a little gypsy music or a classical symphony, some operatic extracts, and a few cabaret hits. What marvellous times we live in!

Otherwise things go on very much as of old; Father, from morning till night, still toils in his office; Mother is at home, or

visiting her friends, while we children are at school, meeting only for meals round the family table. The illustrated magazines are still delivered on Wednesday, but on Thursday it is no longer grammar that we dread, but rather chemistry or physics. If one needs a new hat or a pair of shoes there is no difficulty about it; life is well ordered and standardised, and complications are infrequent. It is now a matter of course that one can hear on the earphones that Prime Minister Plehve was murdered an hour ago on his way to Peterhof, while I am gazing at the flames of my eleven birthday candles in Budapest.

Well, I have become a little older; I can laugh at the children who still believe, as I did not so very long ago, that the suspension-bridge is pushed overnight, or in bad weather, into the tunnel built under the Castle Hill. Other illusions also have been destroyed; I have attended a young school friend's funeral; I have accompanied an old schoolmaster on his last journey to the cemetery. I am now considered a big boy; Mother takes me into her confidence regarding Father's grave illness, and I am allowed to read the daily newspapers, which I do very carefully, not forgetting that one often has to read between the lines.

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In 1904 the Jews were mourning the death of Theodor Herzl, the Zionist leader. I had to pass the house where he was born, which was situated between our office and our home, several times a day.

The son of an assimilated Jewish family settled in Budapest, Herzl, when a student in Vienna, became greatly interested in the problems of his people, aroused by the growing wave of Anti-semitism in Lueger's days, the notorious Tisza Eszlár and Hilsner cases, and the repeated pogroms in Russia, of which he had heard so much.

But the thing that came as a real eye-opener to Herzl was the Dreyfus scandal, which he witnessed in Paris as a political journalist on behalf of an important Austrian daily newspaper. Horrified to encounter such violent hostility—a hatred which made people propose the annihilation of millions, for the alleged offence of an individual—Herzl told himself that if such things were possible in the civilised French Republic, they might, under given circumstances, happen anywhere.

He concluded that the Jews, who had long ceased to be a nation, had once again been welded together, by the hatred of their enemies, into one people, and that consequently only two alternatives were open to them; either complete merging and assimilation by intermarriage, etc., or self-preservation by national reunion.

To counteract the rising wave of Antisemitism, and also the progress of assimilation, which Herzl abhorred, and further, to prevent the Jews from crowding into artificial ghettos of the type described by Jew-baiters as "Juda Pest," or "Jew-York," he proposed the formation of a Jewish State, or of mass settlements preferably in a land suitable for agriculture.

Herzl did not at first insist that the new State must be set up in Palestine, nor did he appeal to religious sentiments, his solution was intended to be solely economic and political. His first thoughts were turned towards the Argentine, and only much later did he conceive the idea of regaining the Holy Land. Still, his main aim remained the same, to find a publicly and legally assured home for the unhappy masses of persecuted Russian, Polish, Rumanian and Hungarian Jews.

He was ably assisted by Max Nordau, also a native of Budapest, who had first practised as a physician in Paris, and then, after becoming interested in social psychology, turned, as Herzl had done, to authorship and journalism.

It is very difficult to judge in retrospect whether the pioneers of the Zionist movement did not make a grave mistake when they turned down the offer of the British Government to place at their disposal some territory in Uganda. It may be questioned whether their adoption of a stiff nationalistic attitude and the concentration of all their aims upon Palestine has not been as detrimental to the cause, from a broader human aspect, as the aggravation of the existing Babel by the revival of the old Hebrew language, which had long become a purely ecclesiastical tongue.

In the pursuit of such ideas it is only too often forgotten that the boast of ancient rights may provoke the appearance of those who can lay claim to rights even more ancient. When the Czechs, for example, stated, quite correctly, that Swatopluk had ruled in their land before the Magyars had even reached Europe, they never mentioned the fact that a long line of peoples had owned that country before the advent of the Moravian prince. On this basis the Danes and Norsemen can easily lay claim to Piccadilly Circus, and the successors of the prehistoric Saurians, who fortunately are not united in groups of any magnitude, have still older titles.

However this may be, the settlement of much greater numbers of people than were involved in this case could have been carried out. Wide open spaces are much more abundant, it seems, than goodwill, or regard for the future of mankind.

The Balfour Declaration, made under the stress of the world war, reminds one of the cells built in the Middle Ages above prison kitchens to harbour people condemned to death by starvation. But all the parties concerned made mistakes, and much could have

been done to avert at least something of the terrible tragedy which befell the Jews and the world.

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Our school games are given more topical names. The Herrero rising, which is giving the Germans such trouble in South-West Africa, is worth considering, but the game which we play under a new name is essentially nothing other than our grandfathers' game of Magyar *versus* Austrian, or French *versus* German, with the same disastrous results to skin and trousers.

To distract the mind of the German people from the Hottentot problem, or perhaps to ease his blood-pressure, William II proposes to Russia a continental bloc on Napoleon's model, directed against Great Britain. However, there is only one real confederation in Europe; that of the theatre-goers, who all rush to see the new opera, "Madame Butterfly," which Puccini, inspired by the war in the Far East, has just composed. I want to listen to this on our earphones, but my parents, finding it unsuitable for my juvenile ears, prefer to take us to a matinée of "The Merry Widow," an operetta by the Austrian military band-leader Lehár, which is just setting out on its conquest of the world from the shores of the Danube.

While we are thus amusing ourselves the war in Asia continues, Port Arthur surrenders, millions kill one another, a revolt breaks out in the Russian capital, and the Grand Duke Sergius is murdered. A mutiny on the battleship *Potemkin*, which occurs about the same time, is more in our line, being greatly to our savage schoolboy taste, and much more interesting than the new book by an unknown Jewish professor, Einstein, *The Theory of Relativity* which is attracting the attention of our masters.

In all this there is nothing to make us vary our normal routine, or to alter the family plans. When school is over and vacations begin we have to go out of town. Mother prefers the German summer, and on our way home we always pay a visit to her father in Berlin. He is seventy, but full of vitality, with a sharp, peppery wit; and he himself not tall, wearing dark suits and top hat, reminds one somehow of a black peppercorn. He is always well dressed, always laughing and joking, rushing us about, never still for a moment. However, appendicitis has lately become fashionable; he does not feel too well after a dinner party, and in spite of the intervention of a world-famous surgeon, who in his younger days had been one of grandfather's "regular student guests," the jovial old gentleman joins his ancestors.

There are other relatives also to be visited: uncles and aunts and cousins, and friends. The older generation are still full of

"1870", the men are proud to wear their Iron Crosses, swaggering in their adopted Prussianism. My mother's brother in law, a very high official in the German State Railway, is the supervisor of great locomotive works and repair shops, we often stay with him, and his family, in Cassel, Guben, Dortmund or Tempelhof, for they often change their domicile in accordance with his sphere of activity. What a holiday for a boy of my age, to be taken for rides on railway engines in the Henschel works, to visit marshalling yards in the company of a highly intelligent and enthusiastic expert! How much he taught me, in the museums, or when we spent a few weeks together in the Alps!—he who was so proud of his official position, of the orders, ribbons, and letters of approval received from the Emperor—a typical intellectual, wearing the blinkers of unquestioning trust, dreaming dreams of a liberal Germany! Like so many of his co-religionists, who had lived in the country for dozens of generations, unmolested since the days of Frederick the Great, apart from a few minor Antisemitic clashes, the yapping of a few street demagogues, they regarded themselves as completely assimilated, on an absolute equality with other Germans. "Well, of course, our boys cannot become officers, and only exceptionally gifted young men can get into the Civil Service, or hold certain academic posts, but that is not so very important," they said, "we really have no reason at all for complaint." How could these chauvinistic citizens divine, how could this patriotic Government official imagine, how could anyone have believed, that only a few decades later this proud, decent man, totally blinded, would end his life, when past his eightieth year, in the Ghetto of Lublin, or perhaps in a cattle truck, which may have been built in one of the factories under his own supervision, on the way to Poland? Would such a thing have seemed possible to any one of us, or merely the fantasy of a mind diseased? Or could anyone have conceived that this little contraption of the Wright Brothers, which surprised the half incredulous public by attaining an altitude of a hundred or a hundred and fifty feet, would one day destroy the Henschel works, the cities of Dortmund and Cassel, where I once spent my holidays, turn our Europe into a shambles, and this Old World, the cradle of civilisation and culture, into a foul dust heap?

Could anyone have expected, in the summer of 1903 and 1906, when "Willy the Twaddler" made trouble in Morocco, and created an "incident" in Algierias, or when the Magyar Parliament was dissolved by force of arms because it had obstructed the Habsburgs' policy of re armament, that things would end like this?

Year followed year, peaceful and undisturbed, we felt so safe under the pleasant shelter of family life, my younger sister was just

THE "REAL" COFFEE-HOUSE





"THE BRIDGE" HUNGARIAN FOLK DANCE

born, each of us going about his or her unimportant affairs. No one heard the approaching pinions of Fate, or the faint subterranean rumble, or marked the thin veil of smoke over the volcano.

But the spiked helmet was there already, and the arrogant moustache, and the *Deutschland über alles* mentality was preparing the way for the cataclysm soon to be unloosed *über alles* indeed—over everybody and everything, in this greatest tragedy that mankind has ever experienced. The world, however, was too busy to realise the fact that in 1907 Turkey was the only Great Power in Europe with which Germany has been able to maintain undisturbed relations.

Francis Joseph's diamond jubilee was the last peaceful occasion on which the Viennese were to see Wilhelm II and the other German sovereigns in the Austrian capital; and King Edward VII's visit to the old Emperor at Ischl, during August, with his excursion to Homburg, a few days later, was also more or less of a farewell to good relations. The Casablanca trouble between France and Germany, the annexation of Bosnia by Austria-Hungary, William II's notorious *Daily Telegraph* interview, and the subsequent debate in the German Reichstag, were signs enough, for this far-sighted British ruler and man of the world, that the fatal hour would soon strike.

Vienna, in those days, was a fine city. Situated nearly in the centre of one of the richest countries of the world, on the banks of a river which traverses more than half the Continent, it became the main door leading to and from the Balkans.

Built against the grandiose background of the Alps, a strange mixture of ancient and modern, but still dominated by the Habsburgs' favourite Baroque, now slowly being superseded by newer styles, the capital had a flavour of its own, perceptible not only in its architecture.

The Court, with its unparalleled splendour, the abundance of uniforms everywhere, the great numbers of foreigners and the many visitors from the Austro-Hungarian provinces who were always present, made it a very lively metropolis, but this liveliness did not detract from its cultured and characteristically intimate character.

A Mecca for artists, especially musicians and actors, a world's fair of entertainment, the model for a certain type of fashion and *bon ton*, the home of good taste, an El Dorado for business people, it offered something to everybody, even to the poorest. Food and drink were excellent and cheap; one could stroll down the Ring with its palaces, visit the parks and museums, which were free to all, or walk through the secluded little lanes to Hernals and other former suburbs, now embraced by the ocean of houses. One could

pass or enter quaint old inns, such as "The Brown Dog," where once Lenau drank his wine and wrote his poems, and Schubert taught his songs to a small choir; while Beethoven lived just round the corner.

The masses of little houses and blocks of flats harboured a strange conglomerate of tenants. On one floor of such a building lived Brahms, in a modest philistine flat; on another a few doctors or lawyers, while a third may have harboured successful bankers or business men, a civil servant's widow, a shop-assistant or a courtesan. The inhabitants got to know one another, or remained unnoticed; there they laughed, cried, loved and slandered; rooms, courtyards, corridors, streets and squares were full of pulsing human life; here was a small cross-section of the world.

The old Stefferl, the gigantic steeple of the Dome of St. Stephen, looked haughtily down on the centre of the city, bustling with traffic; on the two-horsed fiacres, whose drivers were a hybrid of dandy and rowdy coachman; on the flower-girls whose grandmothers had served Rádetzky, been rude to Metternich, and admired old Strauss, and who had not lost their traditional sharpness of repartee. Here were the restaurants and pastrycooks' shops where archdukes elbowed parvenus, aristocrats mingled with lesser mortals, and Frau Sacher taught those a lesson who did not accept the inviolable code of this jovial society.

Here was a shopping quarter whose luxurious like was to be found only in a few of the more fashionable haunts of London, New York and Paris; patronised by extravagant foreigners, the Anglicised ladies of the Austrian nobility, and the wives of the money-magnates. Here they came to buy their unobtrusive blouses, plain tailor-made costumes, flat-heeled shoes and smartly simple hats, all costing a small fortune; all marked by the simplicity that proclaims good breeding.

One of the finest establishments in this district, the Vanity Fair of the Kärntnerstrasse, was a shirtmaker's shop, appreciated only by the real connoisseurs, the few elect, the *arbitres elegantiarum*, who dictate men's fashions; shaving made a virtuosity of dress.

Plain and modest, as such poisonously expensive establishments usually look from the outside, its window displays only one or two exquisite articles; a single silk shirt, a couple of ties, a pair of gloves, and a small Union Jack on a miniature flag-staff, the shop-sign of this firm.

In front of it stands an odd customer, a young man, whose unshaven chin, blue with bristles, and dark hair, lank and unkempt, cry for a barber, while his pale yellow cheeks tell a story of hunger and privation.

Dressed in a black double-breasted morning coat, known in

Austria as a Francis Joseph, its collar turned up to hide the fact that there is no shirt beneath it, his little, strangely luminous eyes have a wild and excited expression as he stares at the article in the window of which he is so sorely in need. His gaze wanders from the silk shirt to the Union Jack and back again ; finally, making an effort to tear himself away, the man walks on a few paces, to return again to the window, fascinated, hypnotised.

His real name is Hitler, but he is known to the underworld with which he associates, the scum of society, in the doss-houses and men's hostels in which he is compelled to sleep, by a nickname, " Oom Kruger," on account of this long black coat, a present from some kind-hearted person.

After the death of his father, who had retired with his family to a village near Linz, the son, Adolf, unable to endure regular hours or to suffer compulsion, left school at the age of fourteen. Living an aimless and idle life, making a slight touch of tuberculosis an excuse for this form of existence, terribly spoilt by his mother, young Hitler resolved to become an artist, and arrived in Vienna at the age of eighteen, intending to enter the Academy school of art.

But he failed in the entrance examination ; and a similar fate awaited him when he tried to become a pupil in a school of architecture. These two disappointments, befalling one as firmly convinced as Hitler of his artistic genius, filled Adolf with hatred ; he hated the academic authorities, the city of Vienna, and even Austria ; in a word, he hated everybody.

Until her death, about a year later, his mother continued to send him money, in spite of her limited resources. But then he had to live by his wits ; which he accomplished mainly by applying to the Jewish charity organisations. To settle down to a regular trade was absolutely against his nature ; so he accepted only occasional odd jobs as an outside porter or messenger ; or he shovelled snow for a couple of days in winter ; sometimes he sold primitive picture-postcards of his own design, and drawings ; he acted as a pimp, worked for a time as a builder's labourer, and in short, did whatever he could to earn a few kronen.

But most of the time he spent wandering about the city ; in the summer he sat on the benches of the promenade overlooking the Danube ; he loitered at street corners, listening to the chatter of the bystanders ; or the harangues of political agitators. During the colder season, which was less agreeable for poor people, Hitler had to go for warmth into the public reading-rooms, the lower-grade free libraries, and the museums ; or he simply remained in his hostel.

He picked up an item of news here, a bit of information there, read the pamphlets distributed gratis by all kinds of organisations,

and conversed endlessly with the riff-raff he met, scholars and artists gone to the bad, semi-intellectuals, pseudo-scientists, unsuccessful in life, charlatans and dilettantes like himself, who blamed the world for their own troubles and failings

He came across criminals, too, ruffians and bullies, who were able to teach this man, so lacking in principle, a thing or two that he never forgot, demoralising him, who was already profligate enough, still further.

Lueger, the genius-demagogue Mayor of Vienna, who had made Antisemitism a political programme, and unscrupulousness in the means of reaching one's goal a virtue, became Hitler's pattern and ideal. Adolf owed much to Jewish benevolence, but it is not always pleasant to remember people who have known one in misery and want, and as his pride was already smarting from his many disappointments, gratitude soon turned into hatred in the mind of the budding megalomaniac. He was convinced that the whole world ought to pay homage to his genius, and the pittance that others gave him, or that the charitable Jews allowed him, was the least to which he was entitled

Specialising now on this new subject, he read what Marr and his disciples had written people who had extracted from the metaphysics of Hegel certain doctrines which seemed to them suitable for inculcating hatred against the Jews, which they certainly succeeded in doing in the case of their new pupil, Hitler

He saw the luxurious life of the capital all around him, well-dressed people entering or leaving expensive restaurants, going to the Opera House or the theatres, he heard how successful the Jews were in the newspaper world, commerce and banking, the names of famous physicians and surgeons like Barány, Politzer, Neumann were not unknown to him, he saw, too, how Reinhardt had influenced the theatre, Schnitzler literature, and Bruno Walter the musical world, while he himself had to remain a nobody, an outcast. A genius, fated to live amongst the dregs of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, to share his room with unwashed Magyars, broken down Czechs, filthy Rumanians, and stinking Polish Jews! How hateful they were, even if they took him to their own soup kitchens, and let him share in the alms of their charity organisations! Him, a Hitler, who ought to live in a palace, and wear gloves, and a shirt like the one in the window of this English shop! As he walks away in disgust he picks up a newspaper which someone has dropped in the street, and then he reads that Blériot has just flown over the Channel, Spanish airmen have dropped bombs from the air on Moroccan tribesmen, and Paul Ehrlich, together with Metschnikoff, has won the Nobel prize for discoveries in medicine! Again those Jews! . .

It is a clear starry night of the year 1909 ; the last clouds of a heavy thunderstorm have just faded away, and the first signs of dawn are already showing, when I stand, in the company of a few other youthful observers, on the roof of our house, to watch Halley's comet making one of its rare appearances in our part of the firmament.

The senior member of this assembly is Lajos, the eldest son of the head concierge, a famous back-stair Casanova, who has patronisingly confided to me the secret of his remarkable successes with the ladies, advising me to read the books of Professor Mantegazza ; they had a great *réclame* in our fathers' days, and served this young man as a *pade mecum* of erotics.

One of his admirers, a little barefooted general servant, having listened with open mouth to our highbrow conversation, now observes, as though to show she is not a total ignoramus, or perhaps in order to change the delicate subject : " Comets always bring wars or disaster ! "

Her gloomy prophecy is confirmed a few minutes later, when my parents return from their visit to the " Grand Danube Festival," which was something of a calamity in several respects. To begin with, the fireworks and illuminations had been drenched and ruined by the rainstorm ; then, as a result of bad management, the whole enterprise had proved a financial wash-out ; and lastly, in a few carefully chosen words my father tells me what he thinks of a " silly schoolboy " who is out on the housetop at this time of night.

The feebly-stammered excuse that I am studying an astronomical phenomenon is regarded as inadequate, for in my father's eyes the company of the youthful Casanova and a few giggling wenches is quite unessential to this kind of scientific research.

Still, the diplomatic relations between the janitor's offspring and myself are not broken off, and I am soon able to inform him that a much more enlightening volume has just appeared on the book market, in the shape of Professor Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* ; and at the same time I am able to relieve him of certain misgivings by the news that the whole problem has now lost much of its hazardous nature since Ehrlich's recent discovery of Salvarsan.

But apart from attempts to communicate the latest discoveries of science, I am fully occupied with my final examinations, while the rest of the family is making its preparations for what is to prove the last vacation we shall spend together on the Semmering.

Father takes up his quarters there in a nursing-home, and the rest of us have rooms in a hotel near by.

When I enter the consulting-room of Father's medical adviser the usual atmosphere greets me ; a m' ' uvi ' F drugs,

cigarette smoke, and floor polish. Outside the large window, on a park bench, an old gentleman is busy reading a paper, while in the background the snow-covered peaks have just taken off their cloud-caps to the sun

"Well," the doctor begins his speech, with the smile that always indicates, in a professional consultant, that something very unpleasant is to follow, "Well, what are your plans, young man?" I tell him that I am chiefly interested in medicine, but that my family want me, the only son, to succeed my father as head of his firm. "You say you are interested in medicine? . . . Well, you see the X-rays show a serious deformation of the aorta . . . he may live another year, perhaps even a few years if proper care is taken . . . You ought to take some of the weight off his shoulders . . ."

The room still smells of drugs and tobacco, the sun is shining, the old gentleman has not folded his paper, the clouds have not risen far above the mountain-tops, nothing has actually happened in the meantime, except that my father's fate has been sealed, and in my eyes he has quite suddenly become an aged man. I too have somehow become older. "Well, cheer up, we will hear another opinion!" . . . The usual way of getting rid of a patient who is dangerously ill.

The "other opinion" is a little more optimistic, but still depressing enough

When the summer is over the family returns to Budapest, while I go for a year to Berlin. "Just look about, my son, see the trade, learn something, amuse yourself"

I work in the office of one of my father's clients; I attend university courses, night classes, concerts, and theatres. I have time for excursions, relatives take me on motor tours, and to restaurants, and all sorts of entertainment, it is the heyday of what we are soon to call the pre-war world. A complacent world, absorbed in making money, and living. Why worry?

One night, a friend, a near relative of Paul Ehrlich, takes me to one of the old man's lectures; he has come from Frankfurt to address a meeting.

Is this packet of human quicksilver, who jumps about, cigar in mouth, brimful of vitality, with a boyish twinkle in his eyes, really the Nobel prize-winner, the slayer of the deadly spirochete? Like a schoolboy he empties a pocketful of various articles on to a table, and picks out some coloured chalks. It is more like a variety turn than a scientific lecture. Now the most amazing formulæ appear on the blackboard, and he explains, full of amusement, with almost childish pride, the phenomenal discovery made by one of

his assistants, modestly passing over the fact that the idea carried out was his. . . .

I am still playing with the idea of studying medicine ; most of my friends are doctors or medical students, and after business hours I attend a series of concerts given by a doctors' orchestra, led by a famous gynaecologist. But I also watch the changing of the guard in front of the Kaiser's palace ; I see him inspecting the goose-stepping soldiers, and admire the remarkable moustache of which William is prouder than old Ehrlich of his dye-stuff theory. I loiter about in this lazy crowd of sightseers, looking, no doubt, a trifle outlandish in my Budapest suit, the work of a tailor inspired by Savile Row. I buy a *Times* at a near-by newspaper kiosk, in the slender hope, a relic of my childish Anglomania, that I may be taken for an Englishman ; and I am overjoyed when one day a policeman tries to explain, by means of unmistakable signs and a repeated "Please !" that I have overlooked one of the many "Verboten" signs.

Time passes ; a year is soon gone ; and now, in the summer of 1911, the papers are full of the Italo-Turkish War, the murder of Stolypin in St. Petersburg, and the appearance before Agadir of the German gunboat *Panther*. I leave Berlin for Leipzig, the Mecca of fur-merchants, the home of book-publishing and music-teaching, and, incidentally, the holder of the world-record for bad coffee.

I wander about in the footsteps of my father, who has passed his apprenticeship here some thirty years earlier. The real centre of the city is now the new railway-station, the finest in Europe ; and just as in Sydney one is asked "Have you seen the Bridge ?" or as in Ayr one cannot escape a visit to the cottage of Robert Burns, so the Saxons are very positive that it is the stranger's duty to pay homage to their new "Bahnhof."

However, far more interesting than this steel and concrete mammoth is a street near by, the "Brühl" ; not only on account of its strange name (which means "the Wallow"), and the accumulation of furs, skins, and hides from all corners of the globe that fill its shops and warehouses, but also for the number of memorial tablets that decorate the house-fronts. Here lived Goethe when a student ; in this inn Schiller drank wine ; on the third floor Richard Wagner was born ; while across the road Leibnitz spent his youth, or Bach jotted down his oratorios.

A few steps farther down the street the identical little houses are still standing which watched the retreat of Napoleon after the battle of 1813, when the Grande Armée had to blow up the bridges to escape the pursuing Blücher. A strange city, bustling with traffic, a commercial beehive ; and yet, only just round the corner, in a cool, quiet church, the boy choristers may still be heard singing as

their predecessors were taught to sing, two hundred and seventy-five years ago, by Johann Sebastian Bach, who was then the organist of St. Thomas's, and cantor of the Thomasschule.

Not only are books produced here by the million, but the Leipzig Conservatorium turns out accomplished musicians almost as rapidly as Ford manufactures motor cars, and here too is the Gewandhaus concert hall, with its memories of Mendelssohn.

I sneak away, during business hours, deserting the world of peltry, to listen to a rehearsal of the "Ninth," conducted by Nikisch, or to attend Wilhelm Wundt's lecture on "National Psychology." He explains, in an almost inaudible voice, that just as a human body is built up out of millions of cells, a nation's mind is born of the amalgamation of millions of thinking brains in one "national spirit," which may sometimes become disordered, just as the body will fall sick if some of its cells are diseased. Nations can go mad, Wundt declares, if enough of their subjects are crazy . . .

I take up my quarters with Frau Hungar, who runs a boarding-house, while her husband, a retired opera-singer, gives singing lessons. The whole place is a musical madhouse, from every room and corner emanate the strains of some instrument, while human voices, male and female, of every register, warble scales from dawn to dusk. As we sit at table, eating *Sauer-kraut* and Frankfurt sausages, someone in the next room, accompanied on the piano by Herr Hungar, assures Elsa, at the top of his powerful tenor, that he will leave for Monsalvat by the very next swan if she will not place her trust in this bawling Lohengrin.

The dining-room is a microcosm of the world, where hot-blooded Spaniards converse with phlegmatic Britons, ceremonious Swedes lose their tempers with informal Bulgars, and, while heavy-footed Gretchens change the plates, a wild Pole tries to convince the Chinese medical student and a blonde Middle Western lady pianist that his country will once again shake off the yoke of the Czars, whatever the Russian anarchist beside them may think.

But one day I return to my parents' flat again rich in experience and full of youthful wisdom, surprised to find how the Budapest railway stations have shrunk, and how narrow the Ring and my old friends' outlook have become. I take my place in the office of the family firm, join a rowing club, profit by the English lessons provided by the newly-arrived Tiller girls, and explain to one and all how I propose to reform our business in particular and the world in general.

CHAPTER XII

THE TURKEY HUSZÁR

THERE is much trouble in Europe ; the first Balkan war has just broken out, and everywhere Navy and Army bills are being rushed through bewildered Parliaments, Dumas, and Reichstags, while the taxpayers groan and submit.

Father, however, smiles tolerantly, and pays the heavy taxes ; also my tailor's and shoemaker's bills. (" You can't expect me to wear ready-made shoes, can you, Daddy ? ") He patiently finances all sorts of excursions, and listens to the reports of my successes in society ; laughs when I tell him about the latest cabaret hit, and does not protest when I book sleepers for our joint journey to the Leipzig Spring fair. He only remarks, quietly : " Your grandfather walked there, or went third class, if no fourth was available."

Father and I share a room in the Leipzig hotel ; it is the first time in our lives that we have been together, quite undisturbed, for several days. Before I am out of bed in the morning he is already standing by the window, saying his prayers. Pressing his fist to his aching back, as I have seen him do for some years now, he is quite absorbed in his devotions.

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Deeply religious, he never spoke of his belief, and never attempted to act the missionary, even to his children. He must have realised that to force the younger generation to follow in the way of their elders would only have provoked estrangement, and we were therefore allowed perfect freedom of thought, being even encouraged to find our own level. I am most grateful to my parents for the fact that they never compelled us to attach ourselves to one or another of the organised confessions which profess to dispense the only truth. Old Fritz's maxim, " Let each live in his own fashion and create his own heaven," was theirs also.

I enjoyed this short period of my life immensely ; it pleased me that he introduced me as his co-worker, and asked my advice when inspecting a parcel of goods. The frank and intimate manner in which he related some of his Leipzig memories brought about a sense of fellowship which I had never known before, and which, unhappily, was to be of brief duration. To see him suffer was terrible for me, who had now to give him such little help as my mother had usually given to mitigate his distress, not

that I could do . . . a cold compress, perhaps, for his heart . . . which was so ill, and still so very kind.

But in spite of all this I knew very little of my father; I understood as little as most children of my parents' thoughts and feelings.

When I looked into his face, into the brown eyes behind which brooded the sorrows of generations, the persecutions which his ancestors had suffered for so many centuries, they revealed so little to me. Now I often meet his look in my own sons' eyes, or see his hands when my glance falls upon my own, which are so like his.

I often did not understand his views. How could I have done so? Less than half his age, still full of naïve illusions, of confidence and faith, how should I realise what only a long life can teach? How, in the course of the years, one finds that a sowing of love brings a harvest of hatred; passion is bartered for faithlessness, friendship is repaid with perfidy, and candour answered with lies. Can a youthful mind conceive how day after day some article of belief crumbles, while the *fata morgana* of illusion disappears, and if one peeps behind the veil of beauty only horror and frightfulness greet the beholder?

Youth has too few real graves to visit, and none of those imaginary tombs that enshrine dead dreams; how can it hope to understand its elders?

My father would have perhaps answered questions that I never asked him, or which I did not understand how to frame. I had not yet learnt how one can withdraw into one's shell—how after burning one's fingers often enough one avoids close contact with others, turning first to one's children, or perhaps to one's pets, and finally to nothing: a soul become destitute.

One realises all this when it is too late, as one realises most things in life. Human beings raise fine monuments only to the dead; they rarely give the living their due, and if the elders longingly stretch out their hands to the young, who are selfish with the cruelty of youth, the icy wall of a different mentality and unequal age is too thick to allow of approach.

Together we look out of the hotel window. Leipzig is in a festive mood; there are garlands and flags, streamers and festoons. At night there are illuminations, fireworks, and torchlight processions, in honour, not only of the visitors to the international fair, but also of the Emperor, and the other German potentates who have come to celebrate the centenary of the famous battle.

The gigantic railway station, now finally completed, is officially opened, and the huge war memorial unveiled. This monumental

atrocities in stone, this sin against good taste, can only be compared with the insipidity known as the Berlin Siegesallee, the "Avenue of Victory": an open-air chamber of horrors, a collection of marble executioners, holding in their hands the carven symbols of cut-throats and stranglers.

When the fair is over my father travels home direct, while I go on to Ulm, to join the crew of our rowing-club eight, which had been sent up river by steamer. This rowing trip to Budapest was the finest holiday imaginable. A company of healthy young men, living for next to nothing on the fat of the land, enjoying the vast expanse of water, and the constant change of scenery, pulling their weight when they wanted exercise, and when tired allowing the stream to bear them onwards . . . no other form of relaxation can be compared with it.

Mediaeval towns, endless stretches of wooded hills, ruined castles, little picturesque villages and old water mills; huge modern steamers, and gigantic rafts of timber, the raftsmen lazily basking in the sun, like us, allowing the Danube to do the work; Regensburg, Passau, Linz, Melk (that queen of the Baroque); the Wachau, with its wild rapids, and vineyards on its banks, unsurpassed by any river scenery in Europe . . . here history could be studied from the sliding seat of an outriggered shell, geography could be learned while happily resting on the oars.

For some time we row in the wash of one of the great barges which are towed in strings by swift little steam-tugs, or travel singly, more slowly, driven by their own motors.

They carry in their huge black bellies thousands of sacks of corn, flour and fruit, while the bargee and his large family are crammed into a miniature house on the deck, gleaming in its friendly whiteness, geraniums blazing in the little windows. How they manage to live in this limited space it is difficult to say, but they all look happy enough, including several dogs, and from the chimney of a kitchen stove there pours in dense clouds the steam of appetising dishes—bean soup, or red-hot fish goulash, which is garnished with green slices of pimento.

A fat, jovial little lady, who observes our efforts to keep up with the lovely smell, shows us, who are now as hungry as wolves, a large dish of plum dumplings, while a couple of urchins, after nibbling off the corn, throw the empty maize-cobs, with the accuracy of veteran marksmen, at the head of our coxswain.

When a warm rain begins to fall, its heavy drops merrily splashing on the water, no one is disturbed. Our bathing shorts and our skins can stand it, and our few belongings are safely packed in oilcloth bags.

Do we feel cold? We have only to pull hard for a few miles.

Is it too warm? A dip in the river; the sun will dry us again in no time, and the cool breeze fan our faces. Vienna is by-passed on a moonlight night; we roll for a while in the wash of the brightly-lit Budapest steamer, which looks to us, on the water-level as gigantic as a *Berengaria*. The rocks of Dévény mark the frontier of Hungary; then come Pressburg, Győr, the Dome of Esztergom—the scores of little watering-places and river spas, and finally—a panorama never to be forgotten—the thousands of little lights along the quays of Budapest, a worthy finish to the five hundred miles' pleasure-trip.

The intended tour of another crew to the Black Sea has to be cancelled, for the second Balkan War has just broken out. Hostilities continue until April, and are then interrupted for a few weeks, only to break out afresh, under new leaders and with slightly different participants, as the Third Balkan War.

But this does not prevent us from holding dances on the deck of the club boathouse, or picnicking, or taking part in regattas and walking tours. "Do you know the eldest Fischer girl is married?" "What, Margit?" We had become a little estranged; no doubt she looked down on a boy about her own age; girls feel so much older. . . .

The Zabern incident makes France and Germany rattle their sabres; it is once again touch and go, but fortunately the trouble blows over. My parents are greatly worried, for the time of my military duty is drawing near; the age-group to which I belong is being conscripted.

I had been sun-bathing all the summer, and working hard in our rowing basin and gymnasium, meaning to look my fittest when I confronted the medical board, as I felt that my rejection would be a private and national catastrophe.

Military service was compulsory in Austria-Hungary: two years in the cavalry, three in the artillery or infantry, or four in the Navy. This was followed by reserve duty of many years' duration, with six weeks' annual training on manœuvres. Holders of school certificates and similar diplomas were required to serve only for one year in the Army, or two in the Navy. A further privilege of higher education was the choice of arms and regiment. Recruits so qualified were trained in separate cadet units, for six months in a school for officers, and for the rest of the time with the regiment.

I was overjoyed when the doctor informed me that my category was A 1, and when I learned that I was accepted for the Tyrolean Rifles. With the optimism of youth, and the complacency then so general, I was convinced that nothing could go wrong; that this "one year" would be tremendous fun; a holiday in the Alps,

among the orchards and vineyards of Southern Tyrol and the Dolomites.

As I did not intend to join my regiment as an ignorant greenhorn, I took some practical lessons from one of our warehousemen, who had just returned from his three years' infantry service as a corporal. An old rifle was soon procured, and our office yard now echoed with his words of command.

Adolf, the old factotum, looked on. He had already served under grandfather, had seen the firm and us children grow up. "I remember when your Daddy came to tell the staff that you were born, and now you are training to be a soldier. Isn't it queer?"

He was not only the office handyman, but a sort of maid-of-all-work to the family. He had a most adventurous career; had spent many years in Texas, and having made money there he came home to Hungary, only to lose it; but he was too tired to emigrate again. From him I had learned my first English limericks; he repaired our toys, and escorted us to school when we were little, his big boots treading a path in the deep snow, helped with the spring cleaning, and in the summer he went to market with my mother, who still did not speak Magyar well enough to escape being cheated by the hawkers. He loved my father with the faithful devotion of an old dog. Now he listened to this "left, right business," as he called it, with misgivings, and was full of gloom; otherwise a great optimist, he had suddenly gone to the other extreme.

In the meantime the spring of 1914 has come. The ice and snow are gone, the lilac trees are in bloom, soon the fruit season will begin, and the date of the regatta is approaching. Father is not too well. He tells me that this year the family will go to Bad Tölz in Bavaria, while I am to take things easy before joining my regiment. He concludes, with a not very convincing smile: "Next year, if I am still alive, we will spend our holidays somewhere in your neighbourhood, in the Tyrol."

I am now alone in our flat, the rest of the family has left. Early in the morning I go down to the Danube for an hour, for a short pleasant pull in a skiff; afterwards I spend the forenoon in our cool office, lunch in the company of some friends, and go back to business. In the evening I patronise one of the many summer restaurants, an open-air cabaret. There is nothing wrong with this sort of life; a little gossip, a little laughter; one reads the papers and magazines outside one of the coffee-houses, with a cool drink in front of one; on the Corso people walk to and fro, well dressed and cheerful.

The news-reels show the Emperor William and the Archduke Francis Ferdinand in the Austrian Crown Prince's Castle of Konopic.

We see them take leave of each other, "The Twaddler" to return to Berlin, while Francis Ferdinand and the Countess Hohenberg, his morganatic wife, will go on to Sarajevo. One watches the film with a sense of boredom, finding it neither interesting nor important.

On the following Sunday, June 28, having come home later than usual the night before, and overslept, I find, on going down to the rowing club, that no crew is available, or even a pair-oar skiff; all are gone! I am thankful that at all events the old trainer, Pagels, a New Yorker, is there; we have a meal together, and rest for a while in deck chairs on the roof-top. It is very hot; the flies buzz round us, crowds of holiday-makers are wandering over the bridges, and along the Danube shores. I am half asleep, as drowsy as the flag that droops over the royal palace. But suddenly this limp flag is hauled down to half mast.

"Look Pagels, look, the flag! The old man is dead!" It was quite a natural thought for Francis Joseph was already eighty four. But I was wrong, Fate was not so kind, she had more lessons to teach the Emperor before releasing him . . .

I had often, during our summer holidays, seen warning placards in the Alps. "No shooting, no shouting, danger from avalanches!" A little snow falls; the sun melts it, at night this freezes, more flakes fall on the icy surface, still more, until the weight becomes enormous, hanging as by a single thread; a bird or an Alpine hare hops across, a peasant boy gives a joyous shout, and the catastrophe is well on the way.

Since 1871 France had harboured one thought only; *Revanche*! Russia wanted to dominate, first Asia, then perhaps Slavonic Europe, and finally, who knows? Germany too began to collect colonies, smaller and then more important bases, all over the globe; began to take a significant interest in the Bagdad railway, while Great Britain explored shorter routes and better connections, sounded markets, and established commercial outposts. No one spoke of world domination, the word was tabu, discreetly avoided; but Vickers Armstrong, Krupp, Thyssen, Manfred Weiss, Schneider Creuzot, Skoda, and other armament concerns were very busy, and so were the newspapers owned by some of these concerns. The shareholders also were doing quite nicely, thank you.

The little wavelets of interest, the ripples of influence, cross one another, causing some interference, new circles are generated, always expanding. Some unimportant incidents occur, sides are taken, and groups form; the Entente Cordiale, the Tripartite Pact, each cluster attracts a few more nations; and all this power piles up like the snow on Alpine summits. Once or twice the perilous shout is held back at the last moment; a weapon already raised for the murderous shot is struck from the hand of some desperate fool;

but then one day, while millions are strolling about in their Sunday best, or doing a thousand indifferent things—I, for example, am eating chicken goulash—a pale, dark-haired youth, with an automatic pistol in his hand, no bigger than a toy, jumps on the running-board of a motor car, one of a procession which is slowly proceeding through a street in Sarajevo, and fires several shots at an elderly gentleman in uniform and his good lady. A few women scream. . . . What is the result of his act? What we have been experiencing for the last thirty years.

“No shooting, no shouting, danger from avalanches!”

For several days nothing happens, except that many barrels of printer's ink are turned into poisonous words, and an official notice is delivered, informing me that the Emperor's Tyrolean Rifle Regiment Number One requests my company on the first of September.

I go on sorting furs and rowing on the Danube; I visit the coffee-houses and read the papers, and I see that the Austro-Hungarian government is very anxious to discover where the poor ragged student, who had rarely the money to buy himself a meal, found the means to purchase an expensive automatic weapon, the little toy which killed the Archduke Francis Ferdinand and his wife, the Countess of Hohenberg *née* Chotek. This heir to the throne of Habsburg was regarded in diplomatic circles as the exponent of anti-Serb ideas, who aimed at concentrating all the Southern Slavs in a single State, which would then be added to the Dual Monarchy as a third component.

But neither the Bosnian police nor the Austrian secret service was able to obtain any positive information, apart from the fact that the murderer, Gavrilo Princip, belonged to the pan-Serb party, and had influential friends in Belgrade. This was neither a reason nor a justification for a war; still, certain circles in Berlin, St. Petersburg, and other corners of the world were under the impression that peace had lasted long enough, and that it was high time to put some blood-manure on the tender plant of civilisation and culture. It is the opinion of these same people that humanity multiplies for the sole purpose of supplying the necessary red fertiliser for this little game of theirs. So Germany encourages Austria to make an example of Serbia; Russia, backed by France, advises the Serbs to show their powerful neighbour where to get off. The rest of the world incites both parties to action by whistling and bawling.

However, as yet no official steps are taken. Francis Joseph, whose foreign policy has become increasingly pacifist, is unwilling to give in to the war-mongers; Stefan Tisza, the Hungarian Premier, utters a strongly-worded warning against any dangerous

experiments ; and so we go about our normal affairs, even though there is a strange sensation in everybody's throat.

On July 23, about three o'clock in the afternoon, I leave our office on the way to the flat, as Father has asked me in a letter to forward something or other for him. When I step into the alley a wave of heat pushes against me like something concrete. In front of the coffee-houses the people sit in a semi-comatose condition, taking off their collars, unbuttoning whatever they can discreetly unbutton. Waiters crawl to and fro, sweating, carrying trays of cooling drinks, the ice cream melting before it is even placed on the table. I hear someone mention a swimming-bath ; the others just stare in front of them, too hot to respond. The heat is incredible, and the few hundred steps I have to go seem to me an intolerable effort, more like tunnelling through a wall of molten lead than walking. In front of me totters the Turkey-Huszár, a poor, insane peasant boy, a harmless creature, one of the many well-known characters of Budapest.

His strange nickname originated in an occasion, when a turkey, escaping in a market-place, was caught by this fellow, who was able to master the powerful bird only by sitting right on top of it. No sooner had the youngsters of the district, always eager for mischief, heard of the feat than they began to pester the poor creature by running in front of him and imitating the movements of riding, while shouting at the tops of their voices "poolll-poolll-poolll," which was intended to represent the turkey's gobble. This raging exasperated him to madness, and made it difficult for him to go, as his habit was, peacefully begging from house to house, for the angrier he became the more deafening was the children's chorus.

But to-day not even the Turkey-Huszár could be aroused from his stupor, and the few urchins who had collected soon abandoned their feeble attempts to excite him.

All this time a strange, thin veil was gathering over the sun. It grew thicker and thicker, until the whole sky was the colour of pea-soup, while the temperature rose to an intolerable height, the heat seeming to press one's skull like an iron ring.

It is not the lull before an ordinary storm, with its little heralding gusts of wind, and the refreshing smell of far-away rain, that reach us long before the first clap of thunder. All the trees are motionless, their torpidity comparable only to the agonised immobility of an animal facing inescapable and deadly peril.

In front of our flat the warehouseman who had taught me my military drill was waiting. He looked quite frightened. "Old

Adolf thinks we shall have a tornado ! ” he reported. “ We never had one before in this part of the world ! ”

Our job took about half an hour and when we stood on the gangway again it had become pitch dark. Suddenly, without any preliminary raindrops or gusts of wind, a solid mass of water, like an ocean wave, came down from the sky, and at the same time a squall sprang up, which hurled us, two strong young men, against the wall of the house, with such force that we were almost stunned. How long all this lasted it is difficult to say, for the phenomenon was so breath-taking that all sense of time was lost.

The calm which followed this uproar of thunderclaps, breaking glass, falling stones and tiles, and rushing water, was perhaps even more frightening than the tornado itself. From every corner pale, shaken people emerged, too shocked to speak. Only one little maid-servant in our neighbourhood kept on muttering : “ This is God’s finger, God’s warning finger ! ”

Budapest was in an indescribable state. The copper roof of the Basilica had been torn off and hurled into the street like a sheet of paper, wounding several people and missing, by inches only, the “ trembling man,” as my sister always called the blear-eyed, palsied beggar whose regular stand was in front of the Dome, and who was a sort of bogey in our family ; a miraculous escape. Lampposts were twisted, and ancient trees uprooted ; the underground railway was flooded, no trams were running, and the telephones were out of order. When I reached the bridge, on my way to the Margit island, I found the Danube a wild torrent of dark water, carrying the most varied cargo of wreckage. Our houseboat was smashed and turned right over ; there was havoc wherever one looked.

The second phase of this “ thirty years’ war ” opened with bombastic broadcast speeches, and military music, even with the wailing of sirens. But the real beginning of it all, in 1914, will be for me, as long as I live, the sight of the stunned Turkey Huszár, tottering along the Charlsring, more like a frightened animal than a human being, under the pea-soup sky that exploded into this nightmare of elemental violence.

The rest of the affair was for me only a formality ; the demarche to Belgrade, the ultimatum, the placards and headlines, the marching soldiers, the singing, shouting civilians, the guns rumbling through the streets ; they were all a mere sideshow, and the real *arsis* of the world-war was : “ It is God’s warning finger ! ”

To telephone in those days from Budapest to Bavaria was no easy matter. Still, I succeeded in getting through to my mother.

who, when I told her that war was imminent, and that my call-up might come at any moment, said, with her usual optimism: "One does not eat the soup as hot as it is cooked!" A nice proverb, but I am still swallowing the boiling broth which had been prepared by our statesmen

I started my military career with a period of waiting. This occupation seems to make up the greater part of a soldier's life, as I discovered in the course of years. To wait for something or other, to hang about, to let the time pass in expectation

I began to get my things ready, rushing the tailor for the extra uniform which cadets had to provide themselves, and went about saying good-bye to one and all. Everybody had some sort of good advice for me. "Buy silk underwear against lice." "Use this powder to make the water drinkable." "You can't exist without a trench periscope" . . . and in the end I had spent a small fortune in collecting stuff which would have sufficed for a much larger expeditionary force. I did all this more to camouflage my real feelings than for any other reasons, and when the moment of parting arrived, when I stood before my father, whom I saw for the first time in my life with tears in his eyes, I suddenly knew what it all meant. But only thirty years later, when my own son had to follow in my footsteps, did I really understand what parents feel . . .

The impressions roused by a simple mishap are difficult to describe to others. How therefore can one hope to put into a few words the memories which a catastrophe as vast as a world-war must leave in the individual? How can one describe a nightmare come true—the ocean of blood, suffering and misery, the global tornado which let hell loose on earth, and was followed by a storm of torment, misery, pain, terror and anxiety?

Fortunately the dust of memory remaining in a single human brain of all these events is only a medley of fragments, of fitful sparks of recollection, atomic records. In retrospect the most colossal tragedies are broken up into isolated images, little pin-point reminiscences, while insignificant incidents may be enlarged out of all proportion. If nature did not provide this safety-valve, all humanity would be tortured into insanity by now. . . .

I remember the long journey from Budapest to Innsbruck, in the company of others who were just joining up, the consolation of being able to pretend that one was not really shaken by leaving one's home, the childish pride in acting the man, when in reality one would have liked to cry like a baby. The railway stations were still ablaze with flags and flowers; the cheering crowds were not yet bored by the endless succession of troop trains, food and drink were plentiful, and our spirits were running high, only to be dashed when the first transports of wounded arrived.

Then came the days of training, when one was more dead than alive with fatigue, and the budding of the first war-friendships, the camaraderie of the army. What good times one had, too, in spite of everything, and how lovely were the mountains, even if one knew what waited behind them! It would take volumes to describe all the various characters and nationalities in our company, the pleasant Austrian aristocrat who commanded it, the non-coms., some of them from South Tyrol, with their strange mixture of the Italian and German languages, the bigoted, primitive people we came across in the deep mountain valleys, the sweat and toil, the laughter and pain.

But one was somehow always ready for something unknown; one felt on the verge of a whirlpool that attracted and repelled one simultaneously; and as though one were permanently in the act of saying good-bye—a feeling impossible to describe.

Waiting. Waiting. Waiting and listening to eternal whispers and rumours. “We are off to-morrow, to Serbia!” “No, I have just heard from the most authentic source that we are to join our regiment in the Carpathians!” “The colonel’s batman told our mess-sergeant that the company is to go to Italy!” Day after day, hour after hour, in endless variation. We were roused at daybreak, because someone or other wanted to inspect us in the afternoon. Now all was spit and polish; this was followed by war-time measures of economy; the antediluvian drill-sergeant mentality made what it could of modern methods; the tedium of garrison life was enlivened by the latest experiences of the battlefield. Such was our life, interrupted only by periods of waiting.

Regiments went off, taking their brass bands with them, the officers still with all the visible insignia of their rank, wearing their sashes, dressed as though for a carnival rather than a modern war. The men, too, wore colourful uniforms; they went to the front in a mood more fitting for a brawl in a village inn. Trained to advance in close formations as in Rádetzky’s days, they were much too heroic, taking no precautions whatsoever; tactics that might be good enough in a knightly tournament, but not against modern weapons. Losses were consequently appalling; whole regiments were wiped out in a few minutes; batteries which had taken up their positions quite openly were pulverised in a matter of seconds. It gradually dawned on commanders and soldiers alike, that this was something quite new, a kind of mass-murder, never before experienced, which had to be faced with other methods of precaution than those which our grandfathers used.

The first wounded came to visit us in our barracks, and their tales of horror dulled our enthusiasm. Day after day we had to turn out for a military funeral, when, to the strains of Chopin’s

inevitable "Marche Funèbre," someone whom we had known, lived and laughed with, and who had now been mutilated by terrible operations, or ghastly wounds, died in hospital, or was taken dead from a Red Cross train. Death became a matter of routine, and we soon discovered that this business of "over running the Serbs," of coming home again "when the leaves fall," this war which so many people told us we would not be able to see, "as the fun will be over by the time you are trained," was lengthening and widening out, increasing in depth, and was likely to be much less pleasant than the militaristic operettas, full of complacent sentimental patriotic songs, with chorus girls dressed up as nurses, and stars in gorgeous uniform, were calculated to make us believe.

The whistle of live ammunition on the range, the little holes which our bullets made in the cardboard figures of our targets, acquired a new meaning for us, and we began to be a little more attentive when a battle trained sergeant showed us how to dig in, or to evade the pleasantries of mortar fire.

Time passed, I slowly crawled up the ladder of promotion, and became a cadet sergeant major, commanding a platoon, my horror of non coms vanished, for these rude gentlemen had suddenly turned polite, the thin yellow strip which indicated that before very long I should be able to repay with interest what they had done to me made them quite agreeable.

I broke a leg one day on an assault course, went into hospital, learnt how to run after giggling nurses with a heavy plaster of paris bandage as a clog, played cards for what seemed like twenty five hours a day, and still had time to watch, from behind a glass screen, the operations on the brain performed by a famous Viennese surgeon. A few weeks later, when I was hobbling about the streets of Innsbruck again, basking in the admiring smiles and glances which the girls gave the "wounded" soldier, and not always troubling to destroy their illusions, the waiting began again.

Papers were full of the battles raging in Serbia, Galicia, and the western front, and while we hung about on the parade grounds blood was shed in torrents. When I asked our battalion adjutant what was going to happen he replied, with a twinkle in his eye. "Don't you worry, our ally in the south will stab us in the back before long!"

One morning, in April 1915, we were suddenly recalled from the exercise-ground, packed into a train, and sent to the Trentino, that paradise on earth.

Before us stretched the blue Lago di Garda, majestic snow-covered mountains reflected in its clear waters. Green, endless pine forests, white Italian villages, the strange pergolas of the vineyards, maize-fields with crops of a thickness and height which

seemed incredible, thousands of orchards, small potato-fields far up in the rocky hills, on heights one would have thought fit only for chamois, a people always singing and washing round Roman fountains and under palm trees ; it was more the setting of an opera than a potential battle-ground.

Names now appeared on our maps, round and sweet like an over-ripe plum ; Matarello, Caljano, Castello Dante, Aqua Viva ; and the filthy little peasant children spoke a tongue which sounded like music. Here were lovely spas, still crowded with not very healthy but still most attractive ladies, and huge sanatoria in the midst of parks, where people could die in comfort, whether of old age or other " natural causes."

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" To-morrow the company takes over frontier duty on the road near Ala." We are thrilled by the news. We march down the wide Roman road from Mori, where I am billeted on a charming old aristocratic lady, in a mansion that is more of a museum than a house, with a library full of the finest books. " May I take Goethe's *Italian Journey* with me for a few days, Madam ? " " By all means, my boy ! "

The boys sing Austrian marching songs ; then our platoon, all South-Tyrolese peasants, strikes up an Italian ditty, " Donna Maria," not quite a drawing-room ballad, but the people we meet grin, the smiling girls show rows of pearly teeth, the sun shines, the pine-forests send us their ethereal greetings, the very sight of the snows high above us is refreshing. . . . Only this morning I read that Przemyśl has been stormed by Nikolai Nikolaievich's army, and that waves of human beings were driven against the concrete wall of Verdun, dying like flies. Can it be that while we march onward singing, to take up a pleasant week-end post on the road to Rome, and the little fishing-craft and sailing-boats look so cheerful on the blue mirror of the Lago di Garda, and everything is so peaceable, somewhere in East Prussia millions of human beings are drowning in the Masurian Lakes ? Can there be such horrors when the sky here is so serenely and profoundly blue ?

Now my soldiers sing " Due per due, quatro per quatro ! " and suddenly, as we are nearing some Italian peasants, they strike into the Andreas Hofer hymn—which, however, brings no smiles to the faces of the Italians.

Ala. A little railway station, which has been passed by millions of holiday-makers, honeymoon couples, artists, on their way to the south. Here still stands the road-house where Goethe, one hundred and thirty years ago, waited for a change of horses, and described the scene, in a few words, better than I could in a whole

volume; he also sketched a few mulberry trees, and grumbled about Emperor Joseph's bad intentions towards the Venetian Republic.

We drink a glass of red wine; little urchins jabber in their rapid lingo; other children join us, bringing flowers; one boy throws a lizard into a girl's blouse, and there are shrieks and laughter. A little toddler is picked up by one of my men. "He is just like my Seppl at home, Sir!" Everything is so peaceful; we are enjoying a real holiday in the Alps.

We march off again, along the Roman road, accompanied by the swift waters of the Adige—the Etsch, as the German merchants named it, whose carts for centuries rumbled up and down this narrow valley, opening on to the richness of Italy.

But when we reach our post it is a concrete affair; in front of it, running east and west, is a long ugly snake of barbed wire, interrupted only in places, to let a road or railway track pass, but even there some "Spanish rider" entanglements are ready to close the gap at any moment, while parallel to our wire, only a few hundred yards farther south, the Italians have constructed a similar token of our alienation.

There they stand, in their dove-grey uniforms, and their queer little feathered robbers' hats, the Alpini, the "Dago" counterpart of our own company. They take no notice of us, and we return the compliment. It is not as it used to be, when the lads of both nations foregathered at the boundary post, exchanging cigarettes and drinks, and chaffing one another. The rifles are now loaded, the men do not sing, and everybody speaks in whispers. I stop reading Goethe, inspect the maps carefully, and find that a strange, yellow mental veil has descended over the cheerful picture.

The week soon passes; we return to Mori, and are greatly surprised one morning to learn that without any warning the Capo di Comune (a sort of mayor), some priests, and a number of nuns—"You know, the friendly ones who run that children's home where your men are billeted"—have disappeared. Strange rumours begin to get about, of lights being shown on mountain tops, of fires, started in the hills, of a woman caught who was dressed in a uniform, or of men in nuns' robes. Civilians are advised by the government to leave, and the place becomes a beehive.

On May 23, 1915, I am instructed to take over a small, miniature island on the Lago di Lopio, a few miles from Riva. We are all very pleased to get away from the eyes of the colonel. It is a marvellous summer night; the cicadas are chirping in the trees, the nightingales are singing, oblivious of the gravity of the situation. Wafts of jasmine-scented air make us sleepy; I may have even dozed for a few minutes, when a strange sound, *pack-pack*, like the

shots on a far-away rifle range, interrupts the peace. *Pack-pack*, a series of irregular detonations; then, unexpectedly, a sharp hammer-blow in the tree above me; *pack-pack*, again, and now a whistling sound, quite near; a bullet striking a rock not far away goes off with a sort of strange chirping, a thin, sinister note, the first ricochet I had ever heard, but not the last by many thousands. "Is this the real thing?" everybody seems to be asking; they are thrilled, and interested rather than frightened; nevertheless, we take cover. . . .

Nothing is to be seen; only this intermittent firing is to be heard, coming, as it seems, from a wood across the water. The bullets whistle, chirp, hammer, and raise little specks of dust. We are quite helpless; we fire a few shots in what we take to be the enemy's direction, and apart from that we lie doggo. We have a field telephone, it suddenly buzzes, and then a crackling voice tells me that under all circumstances we are to remain where we are. It is just as though we were on a manoeuvre, and I expect any moment to hear a bugle calling upon us to confront a brass hat, who will tell us off for some minor untidiness or other. But the bugle does not sound, the firing grows more intense; we reply to it in a senseless fashion, aiming at the bushes ahead of us, without seeing any target. The Italians seem to be doing much the same; nevertheless, one of our men is wounded, and I am conscious of a strange lump in my throat, like a piece of felt; I cannot swallow. I have a vague feeling that this situation is not new to me; I must have dreamt it, or read of it in a book. And then I see one of the men beginning to crawl backwards. "Mayerhofer! Where are you going?" "Just a few steps, Sir, behind this rock!" "Stay where you are, Mayerhofer!" But he turns his head so strangely . . . he twists about a little, shivers, and does not look up after my second shout. I feel uneasy; crawl over to him, and find that he is dead. There is only a small, insignificant wound in his forehead, but when I take off his cap the skull does not look nice.

What can I have eaten last night? It must be that damned tin of cold bully beef. . . . Pull yourself together—you have never been sick in a dissecting-room! I wish I could have taken the bottle of old brandy the old lady offered me. What have I to do now—what do the military textbooks say? . . . Nothing, apparently, of any use to me on this occasion . . . and I remember how Mayerhofer picked up that little kiddie at Ala. . . .

We stick it out all day; nothing exceptional happens, except that we hear a distant rumbling. "Is that thunder, Sir?" "What, in this fine weather? Don't be silly, it's guns!" "Ours?" And as this seems the pleasanter solution, I say: "Naturally!"

At night a couple of machine-guns come up, and Mayerhofer is

carried away, and when the two steel rattles open up in the morning, the bushes opposite are silent. We all feel greatly relieved; now, surely, nothing can happen to us. . . . But not ten minutes later a shrill, unearthly note, a long-drawn howling scream, with an almost vulgar, malicious undertone, comes nearer and nearer, louder and louder; there is a sickening thudding detonation, and a colossal fountain of mud, water, stones, and smoke shoots up in front of us, pushing my head, which was almost touching the ground, right into the soft forest soil. . . .

One learns to adapt oneself; the nerves become disciplined, the stomach gets used to shocks; the human mind is fairly robust, the body of *homo sapiens* is a tough proposition. Postcards are worded: "I am quite well and cheerful. . . ." As a matter of fact, we were really cheerful; we played our card games, and even read at times; after a while we could sleep, and look into one another's eyes without flinching; we lost the paleness under our sunburned skin, and reassured ourselves by telling smutty stories, or swearing the most filthy oaths in all the languages of the Dual Monarchy. As time went on Mayerhofer was joined by a great company, recruited now not only from the northern and western fronts but also from the Italian theatre of operations.

We are now quite near the enemy, in a different sector altogether, and a new kind of secret understanding has sprung up between the two armies facing each other. On neither side have definite orders been given, but the foolish, aimless habit of firing at invisible targets has been discontinued. One does not playfully disturb the enemy; if we do open fire we do so in order to kill, not merely to provide a harmless firework display, or to keep up our spirits, as a child whistles in the dark. A certain chivalry even is displayed: "Stop that blasted rattle—don't you see they want to get that fellow away? he's been howling now for six hours, and we can't finish him off because he's behind that rock. . . ." The lines begin to take definite shape; the trenches and barbed wire entanglements join up; they stretch along the valleys and mountain slopes, over fields and through forests, crawling from the Balkans, like a gigantic venomous serpent, to the Karst, and thence via the Alps, far northwards to the Western front. . . .

We sit in our dugouts, interested only to know how much concrete or rock is above us; we speak, like an order of mystics, a new language, a jargon of technical terms, understood only by soldiers at the front; words which differ, perhaps, in each army, but which mean the same in English, Bosnian, or Italian. A "pig" no longer means a fat, grunting animal; the word now

indicates a certain type of shell; "Quam" is the onomatopoeic imitation of the sickening thud of a trench-mortar shell, known as a "Coffre" to the French; while the "whizz-bang" hated by the Royal West Kents has been baptised "Tschin-Boom" by the Austrian army, remaining the same swift, treacherous, damnable killér. These notions seem to travel as though borne by some psychic fluid, traversing no man's land, crossing minefields, streams, and wire entanglements, effecting an involuntary and unconscious exchange of ideas between the enemy hosts. Military journalists and special correspondents all the world over write clever articles on the moral effect of heavy artillery, while we, out here, have a strange sort of pity for our adversaries when the gigantic fountains of earth spring up on the other side of the line. They write of the moral effect; we "know" it. Now, after serving one's apprenticeship, one can feel what is coming—understand with one's nerves the meaning of certain noises, and exactly what one may expect from a high trill, a medium quaver, or a deep throbbing note. A species of scholarship is attained which eats into the nervous system like a corrosive acid, hollowing the mind until it is like a rotten tree, blasted by lightning; and the more training one receives, the more of this kind of practical instruction, the worse it gets. Each double detonation, indicating that one of the sinister steel birds of prey has started upon its trajectory, that one of the infernal machines that are hurled through the air is approaching us, humming and screaming as it flies as though to give warning of its route, makes the brain grow sorer and sorer, until in the end it feels like an angry flesh-wound rubbed by an ill-fitting boot.

Now one begins to appreciate a few hours' rest; behind the lines, in a "safe area" when one is sent on an errand to Trento, where the gentlemen of the High Command live in luxurious hotels. There one can have a bath undisturbed, sleep in a real bed, enjoy a meal without having to keep listening for what is coming. One can visit a coffee-house, where effeminate staff officers, well-dressed brass hats, mingle with "front-line swine" who have not quite lost the smell of the trench, and still wear its clay on their boots. Here one can admire that new crowd, the airmen, mostly youngish men, who are not satisfied with the ordinary perils provided by the enemy, but add to them the dangers of the air, the erratic and insidious tricks of their primitive machines. We, militarised earthworms and rock-climbers, regard them as freaks, perhaps with something of the feelings of a mole watching an eagle.

But we soon get used to them, to the petrol-fed birds on which they fight their strange aerial tournaments, and we find, when we meet them on a coffee-house terrace, that for the moment at least, their knightly nimbus is extinguished; and the

jokes as ourselves, have the same look, as of frightened animals, in their eyes.

There are few formalities to be observed on our arrival, when we join this strange company, containing representatives of all arms, regiments, and nationalities, whose lingua franca is a typical Viennese officers' German, with perhaps a slight Magyar, Czech, or other accent. For all customers alike, the *piccolo* shouts his "Una café nero!" into the kitchen, or in summer, "Orangeata!" No one seems to be surprised that one is still alive and whole, or that one is wearing an additional star, or a coloured ribbon for valour. One's departure, too, is quiet and inconspicuous; one says, quite casually, "Servus!" or just clicks one's heels. Someone, perhaps, may ask: "Going back?"—which means, back to a hell of unspeakable horrors; never anything else. By the time you have reached the door somebody else has taken your chair, which you may never occupy again, if when you "go back" one of the many pieces of metal that are flying about should hit you in the wrong place, and by way of farewell you have the *piccolo's* "una café nero!" for the next customer.

As the pupils of the eye contract or expand by an automatic reflex, so the mind of the front-line soldier adapts itself to rapid changes. Perhaps he spends the night crouching in a shell-crater, and the following afternoon he may be laughing at a music-hall act in Trento or elsewhere.

Letters arrive from home; my mother and my sisters tell me how poorly Father is; it seems that his health has been still further undermined by anxiety, and by the news that two of his warehousemen, one of them my former military instructor, have been killed in battle. An application for compassionate leave has been made through a friend who can pull certain strings in Vienna. But the War Office does not see any reason to release an "irreplaceable" member of the Imperial forces for a week merely because his father is dying; his father, who writes to him, still in his beautiful handwriting, now a little shaky: "I have not seen you for over a year, and am longing to meet you before I bid farewell to this world. . . ."

CHAPTER XIII

THE ROUNDABOUT

TIME passes ; the vineyards deep down in the valleys are symphonies of warm colour, the trees are blazing in their autumn tints, and at this altitude there have been heavy falls of snow. It is very quiet ; only an occasional shell comes over ; a few stones fly into the air, continuing to fall even after the echoes of the detonation have died away ; a black hole appears in the snow, but there is no other damage to speak of. One of these fragments of rock finds me out, and crushes a finger, but as I am " irreplaceable " I ought hardly to notice the injury, especially when I read how the leader-writers at home are unable to lie peacefully in their feather beds, while the food turns sour in their mouths, when they think of the heroes at the front.

Now it becomes absolutely quiet ; not a sound is heard for days, apart from the hammering and sawing and wood-cutting, and the work with pick and shovel, which betray the fact that the Italians and ourselves are getting ready for the cold season. Bank clerks and waiters, business men and peasant boys, artists and chemists, vagabonds and students, all the units of this vast hotch-potch called an army, are looking forward to the Alpine winter which will add to their routine troubles, the normal dangers of their profession, the perils of avalanches and snowstorms. In our mutual adversity we forget each other for a while.

The mail has just brought me another letter informing me that Father is fading away ; it is a question of hours, and by the time the letter has reached me he may have gone. . . .

I am sitting behind a rock in the warm Indian-summer sunshine, which contrasts strangely with the snow and ice that cover this peak. The lines tell me that my father may be dead. My father, on whose hand I hung as I toddled beside him, when a little child, and for whom I always waited on our balcony when he came home, with his characteristic step, the cherry-wood walking-stick in one hand pressed against his back, while in his other hand he carried a huge water-melon, or a basket of grapes, or other fruit ; he never appeared without a present for his family. I remember, too, how I used to stand at a window, on Friday night, or on feast-days, listening to the strains of organ music coming from the brightly lit synagogue opposite our house, until the congregation began to leave, when I tried to recognise my parents amidst the dark mass of festively-dressed people now thronging the streets.

Sometimes, on a warm evening, he hired one of those horse cabs, which were strangely enough named "comfortable" all over the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, to take the family for a drive, or into one of the small restaurants, only a few tables in a courtyard, under an old tree, known to a few connoisseurs, where we were treated as friends by the proprietor and his wife. Father enjoyed seeing us eat and drink even more than he enjoyed his own wine and food.

I remembered, suddenly, a number of things which I would have liked to tell him, at a time when I was already quite grown up, when he would come at night to my bedside, and on seeing me awake, would only mutter, in a sort of shamefaced way: "Oh, I just looked in to see if you were home yet. . . ."

And now, for once in a way, Fate was kind. The fine weather, the lull in the artillery fire, may have brought them out, but there they were—a group of brass hats, including a general.

I cannot tell if the Dagos saw their brass hats, or their motor cars in the valley, but at all events, hell broke loose, and some heavy stuff came over. My dugout was the nearest. "Your Excellency, may I make you a cup of coffee?" His Excellency drank it with a relish, and talked to me for a while; I told him my trouble, and showed him the letter and in spite of the fact that I was "irreplaceable" in the eyes of a certain gentleman in the High Command, General Dankl offered to take me with him, so that I could reach the train for Vienna in time.

Now that one is an Ensign one travels in an officer's sleeper, with a batman; a very different journey from that to the front fourteen months earlier. I send off a wire, and my sisters meet me at the station. Everything seems strange; the civilians, a taxi, the shop windows, our front door, the concierge, the balcony . . . there is a thick lump in my throat.

Mother cries a little; the doctors are with Father; they have to prepare him with oxygen cylinders and injections for the meeting with his son.

His eyes smile at me. "How thin you are, my boy, and how sunburned! Are you wounded?"—"Oh no, only a poisoned finger; there is no war where I am, Daddy; no danger; don't you worry; it's more a picnic! It's not likely that they'll send me to the front. . . ." And as I tell this pardonable untruth I see, in my mind's eye, the rocky hell, where "my men" try to burrow, with cold chisels and dynamite, into the bowels of the mountain, to escape that picnic. . . .

He strokes my hand, and in his deep voice—very deep, but now

so weak—he tells me, quite bashfully, how well he has provided for my mother and sister, mentioning figures which ought to put my mind at rest, but which after this “Alpine holiday” are so meaningless, so irrelevant. . . .

“Go, my boy, go and see your friends; I will sleep a little now.”

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I am back in my old room again; everything is so familiar, and yet, somehow, so quaint; the sofa, the books, my old civilian suits. . . .

All day long Father sleeps, dozing under the influence of morphia; but late at night the nurse calls me, to tell me that he is sitting up in bed. I am with him immediately, and he now speaks Magyar to me, which he has not done before. I hold him very tight. “Lie down, Daddy!” He caresses my face. “Let me sit up with you for a moment, child!” His lips smile, but his eyes are weeping. . . .

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He had waited for me; and now that I had come, he went. Death had become a routine job for us out yonder; it made its choice without much ado; but here, in my parents’ bedroom, amidst the old furniture which I knew so well, I became only a frightened child again. I suddenly remembered all the questions I wanted to ask him, and it gave me indescribable happiness to remember that I had been able to tell him that little lie about the “real picnic.”

Little more than a week later I was back at my post. Everything that had happened—the funeral, this modern form of running the gauntlet, the empty words of the priest, who turns the knife of compassion mercilessly in each individual mourner, the few hours in Vienna and in Trento—seemed only a dream, and this, here, the screaming, howling reality.

Life has become more or less nocturnal. By day one sleeps, and when darkness falls there is a renewal of activity, under the flickering, ghostly radiance of Véry flares, the poisonously green Alpine moonlight. Then provisions and munitions come up, one sets to work on repairing the wire and the trenches, and the thousand and one little jobs that make up a front-line soldier’s “day.” The soul grows benumbed; one waits for the mail, for food, for anything . . . and only in the back of one’s mind there lingers something like a faint memory of a life one lived long ago.

All this may suddenly change. For me it changes with a telegram that I have been transferred to a divisional staff.

Can it be true? To live now with other demigods, in a world

which is only nominally at war, which offers all the pleasures of civilian life, and yet at the same time the honours due to warriors?

A safe zone, Matarello, attractive wooden barracks, a real bed in a pleasant room, a shower bath, swimming-pool, a jolly officers' mess, little to do, and much time to read, I can cycle, or ride on horseback if I want to go to Trento, to Roveretto, to see my friends and the sights

Troops march through the place on their way to their lines, high up in the mountains, for me, however, now no more than a coloured line on a huge map, full of little flags, pins and dots. I feel a strange sort of nostalgia, a craving for adventure, I am soon sick of the brass hats, fed up with civilians, with garrison spit and polish. When a nice little job is going—the post of observer—I apply for it. “Don’t be such a fool as to leave this place!—But, well, if you insist!”

Six thousand five hundred feet above sea level, here the war seen from a *belvedere*, a well heated stone hut. The food is brought up by mules, I have a fine crowd of boys, artillery observers, in my company, and a panorama which has no parallel in this world. The gigantic rock towers of the Brenta and Presanella group rise from a pedestal of wooded hills, behind them, dressed in their eternal white coronation robes of snowfields and glaciers, are the majestic Ortler and Adamello, surrounded by hundreds of vassal peaks. A criss-cross of deep valleys, through which rivers and rushing, brooks flow down toward the Italian plain, which lies outspread to the south, meeting the Adriatic, somewhere beyond the horizon, while the whole landscape is speckled with emerald lakes, and marble white spots which are towns, villages, solitary hamlets, or ruins. During the hours of sunlight this picture is constantly changing colour, the seasonal tints giving it a special charm, at night the stars turn the waters into sparkling mirrors, and the moonlight creates a world of strange, spectral shadows, a land of phantoms.

Now that the snow is quite hard one has to go about on skis, and when storms rage and the avalanches rumble down the hills we sit round a crackling fire, the burning pine-logs emitting a Christmas like atmosphere.

We now see the first Capronis in the blue winter sky, surrounded by the playful looking puffs of white shrapnel bursts, and while we watch our heavy guns drumming some objective, the Italians answering with theirs, we are only onlookers, the nearest shell burst is several miles away.

New Year's Eve, 1916, has arrived, and so has my commission as lieutenant, and I start on a four-weeks' leave, which I spend in Budapest, accompanied by a Tyrolese batman with an apostolic

beard, a huge hound, and several pairs of skis. But when I return my pleasant post has been taken by someone else, and as the preparations for the great summer offensive have begun I have to join the footsloggers again. Now that the shells come nearer they have lost the attraction they had when I viewed them as a spectator, and a new kind of horror is added by the missiles thrown from aeroplanes. The nasty little steel darts are quite harmless unless they score a hit, but the bombs, those swishing devils, are incalculable; they can come from any direction, and explode in the most unexpected places.

In our sector is one of the huge Skoda motor howitzers. Its boom shakes the whole district, and when the twelve-inch shell starts on its journey a strange ring of smoke becomes visible over the muzzle. They are just "giving the works" to an Italian fortress. Its steel turrets are lifted right out of the concrete base by the explosion, and look, after this tickling, like silly carnival hats on the heads of drunken women. Little disturbed ants go rushing about, mere human specks; it is all quite amusing, except for them, and for the relatives of those who are buried in the ruins.

For a time I join the air force. On the Pergine aerodrome the strangest contraptions are lined up; at close quarters they seem only a tangle of bamboo struts, a canvas, wire, and sheet metal. To go up in one of these is quite a sensation, but my sense of equilibrium gives out after a while, and I have to go back into the trenches. The first heavy barrages begin; the fun has commenced; someone shouts "Look out!" and a trench-mortar shell comes down just in front of us. The blast is terrific; it lifts me right out of the trench; as I clutch at a branch of a tree it whirls me round and throws me to the ground. A shoulder is dislocated, and a collar-bone broken. That means a few months' garrison service.

Autumn has come; we are on Monte Passubio, a veritable hell on earth. The Italians have been trying for weeks to turn our line round this pivot. Tens of thousands have climbed this hill, never to return. We crouch in the holes in the rock, in caves, shaken by the explosions, tossed about like scraps of paper. Only a few companies at a time can find room on the plateau, once a boulder-strewn mountain top, now flattened out by artillery fire, and covered with gravel, which turns into a rain of stone projectiles with each explosion. It takes only a little while to grind up a battalion in this infernal mill, for no trenches are left, and one has to stick it in the open, in full view of the Dagos, who are on a similar plateau, but slightly above us. The constant heavy barrage has now been continued for days, and one infantry attack follows another. All

sense of time, of duty, of anything has been lost. . . . Minutes creep like days, hours crawl like years, and one seems to grow older in seconds. . . . If only I were dead! I remember how Mother used to tell me, when I left for school on a winter day: "Put your collar up, my boy!" What would she say now, if she saw me here?

The telephone wires went days ago; they cannot be repaired in this fire. Slips of paper are sent back; but only a few reach their destination. "Sir, I have lost three-quarters of my men!" "Stick it!"—"But it is murder!"—"Stick it if you don't want to lose your officer's stars!"

Once more the Alpini have stormed the height; their hand grenades' pop, the barrage swings backwards and forwards, one can no longer distinguish between ours and the enemy's; all is flying stones, smoke, a screaming, whistling, blasting inferno. Blood, human flesh in lumps and shreds, men driven out of their wits, a company of suicidal maniacs . . . no relief, no abatement, neither by day, nor when the flares paint everything with the hues of putrefaction.

We have been withdrawn and sent forward again to the plateau. I have a jumble of men from all companies. My batman has managed to get up to me somehow; he was trying to bring me some food, but he now holds in his hand only an empty mess-tin—empty save for a few splinters of rock. "What date is it, Koelbel?" "The nineteenth, Sir." "What, December?"—"No, October!"

What seemed another year has passed—it must have been at least some minutes—and we are now within range of a machine-gun which the Dagos have brought up into a new position.

I am crouching now in a flat shell-hole, a quite comfortable-looking mass of rock in front of me; beside me is a cadet, a mere child. Bullets whistle and rattle against the rock; then I feel a strange pang; there is a smell of steel and flint; a queer blow like the stroke of a flat hand beneath my belt. The cadet turns his face to the ground and is dead. A ricochetting bullet had burst into several pieces and hit us both. . . .

I am carried on a stretcher down the mountain side. The narrow path is lined by what seem thousands of corpses, waiting for burial; a parade of the fallen. Their poor twisted bodies lie in rows, extending for miles, from the Passubio down into the valley, where they are joined by others, coming from the Zugna-Torta, the Roite, the Col Santo, and other branches of this high Alpine slaughter-house. Tyrolean Rifles, Landeschutz, and Styrian infantry; even Bosnian Musulmans, who never abandoned their fez for the steel helmet, have come here to defend a mass of stony rubble and to die

for a spot which was not large enough to become the cemetery of all these unfortunates. The cold, calloused peasant hands, the manicured fingers of dead officers, are stretched out in unison for something they will never reach. A voiceless, motionless crowd of accusers, charging humanity with unpardonable folly. . . :

A rumbling ambulance, a white train, smelling of ether and filth, smiling nurses, warm water, order and cleanliness. Telegraph poles and railway stations; strange dreams, more stations, a huge hall, and now a motor ambulance. Vienna.

A school turned into a hospital. Its windows open on to the Ring, and the strains of Chopin's *Marche Funèbre* pouring through them tell us that someone is going on his last journey. It is Francis Joseph's funeral; the Emperor is being carried on this rainy November morning to the Capucin crypt, to find the rest for which he has been longing, and which he so well deserves. Masses of clergy march in the procession, vying with the military for predominance. But in the eyes of the Habsburgs, and of Francis Joseph in particular, who was more than merely anti-liberal and pro-magnate, the crown and the Cross go together. The pillars of the Church have supported the crown, and the crown protected the Church.

The weeping crowd have long forgotten how often the Emperor has broken his word, forgotten the autocratic nature of his rule; they are now only mourning a lonely old man, who was a true Viennese, a genuine Austrian, for whom the Imperial city was the centre of the world, and who looked down on the other Crownlands as one does on poor and uneducated relatives. Even the Magyars forgave him for the fact that in his heart he always regarded them as rebels.

Nothing had been spared to him in a long life, in the course of his career as a sovereign, which began when one still had to travel by post-chaise, and which had lasted long enough to enable him to decorate pilots for bombing the Italian headquarters.

Francis Joseph's sole purpose in life was the integrity of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. His successor was Charles, the son of Otto, who had made so much trouble, and the old Emperor himself had no illusions about his heir, nor about the future of his realm. He knew that it was no easy matter to hold together a conglomerate of peoples, religions, and races, which had almost automatically formed a union against the Turks, Napoleon, the Russians. A land which had been menaced by the Prussians, and threatened by the Slavs from within and without, could not stand up against the shock of a world-war under a weak ruler.

When the band returns from the place of interment it is already playing one of Strauss's marches. Francis Joseph, almost before

he has had time to settle down in the company of his ancestors, is already forgotten Life marches on. . .

Sick leave, Budapest; my old sofa; the book-case.—“What would you like for lunch, my boy?”—Friends come to visit me, including the Fischer Margit, who has been married now for years They bring me flowers and fruit. They are all very cheerful, fortunately they can't see into one's mind—“Is it very bad out there?”—“Oh, no, just a matter of routine.”

But one is soon back at the old routine, now in the Dolomites, amidst their pillars of rose red rock, having in the meantime qualified as an Alpine instructor, and learned some new methods of killing in an assault course

The world has by now settled down to the war, it is no longer a haphazard affair, the lines are properly built up, we live in caverns cut deep into the rock, we sleep on comfortable bunks, and we have electric light and other amenities in the trenches

When the sun at last rises, and I step into the door of the cave before retiring for the day—since we are now more or less nocturnal animals—the Croda Rosa greets me, with Monte Cristallo and Piz Popena, formerly the shrines of the rock climbers and tourists who came on pilgrimage to this paradise from all parts of the world, but now, on the summits of these giants, in snow and ice, more than ten thousand feet above the sea, are our batteries, searchlights, and machine guns, and so are those of the Italians

By day and night, without interruption, a series of dull explosions comes from the bowels of this mountain, the Monte Piano, now anything but a “quiet mountain” The explosions indicate an underground race, an attempt to tunnel under the enemy's positions and blow him up When I am lowered into the shaft, and walk down the adits and galleries in which our men are at work with pneumatic drills, and filling the holes which they make with ecrasite, and blowing out great masses of rocks, which are conveyed to the surface, I can hear the Italian miners at work, unpleasantly near

They are up to the same game Who will win this obstacle race? That is the question The critical stage is reached when the blasting operations are completed and our men begin to lower the great charges of dynamite into the shaft.

We were watching from a distance when the Col Santo was blown up by the Italians, a few hours before our own preparations were complete Whole regiments went up with that artificial volcano, and rocks fell miles away The Cimone, however, was blown up by Austrian troops, and since the Italian explosives had already been placed in position, the result was devastating

So we knew what to expect, and the continual bumping and rocking beneath our caverns did not tend to raise our spirits.

"The chaplain's orderly told our cook that he heard it from the brigadier's barber. . . ." So began a story which informed us that something big was brewing. New guns began to arrive, and I was attached to the divisional command for the purpose of guiding reinforcements into our lines.

Deep down in the valley I met the first Germans, who looked very clean and efficient in spite of the pouring rain. But I wondered how they would look up there in our white hell, where the avalanches played havoc with the troops. A barrack containing more than three hundred men had gone west a few days earlier, flattened out by one of these catastrophic falls; not a soul was saved.

The weasel-faced German major informed me, with typical Prussian modesty, that they had come to pull us out of the gutter, while one of his sergeants, a real Berliner cut-throat, told one of my professional guides, Lanzinger, a world-famous rock-climber and Alpinist, that they were going to teach the Tyroleans how to tackle the mountains. But Lanzinger, who fortunately understood very little of the Berlin dialect, smoked his pipe unperturbed, and when the word discipline was mentioned he grinned in an unmistakable manner.

When a dismounted Huszár regiment alighted from their railway-carriages, and their bandy-legged colonel, a real horseman, who regarded the transfer of his rough-riders to the infantry as the greatest possible affront, joined the crowd of officers, I, answering their question as to where the line ran, quite innocently pointed to the range of snowy Alps.

This elicited an explosion in Magyar from the Huszár colonel, containing, among other highly uncomplimentary references to the High Command, the query: "Does that silly crowd imagine that my mother was married to a chamois?" After the disclosure of the whereabouts of our lines the Prussian became perceptibly quieter, especially when we walked past the huge cemetery of snow-victims, and they were shown the primitive single-cable funicular, which would transport the "Herr Offiziere" to an altitude of ten thousand feet.

But the lads of the Puszta and the "Piefkes," as we affectionately called the Germans, had to stick it out with the rest of us for a while, until in October 1917 the break-through at Caporetto made an end of our winter sports, and fortunately also of the tunneling operations, which had in the meantime made considerable progress.

It is not easy to describe this rout, one of the big . . . the history

of the Great War. We glided on our skis for hours through the Italian positions without meeting a soul; lines which had bristled with troops a couple of days earlier were now desolate, and the batteries which had harassed us so cruelly were standing forlorn. We could not use the roads, as every thoroughfare was strewn with the most incredible jumble of discarded possessions, and I have never seen such a collection of valuable photographic cameras, weapons, and articles of clothing as lay in the snow of this valley, leading down to the Piave. We passed Italian divisional headquarters where the steaming macaroni was still in the pot—we raced past columns of tired, hungry Dagoes on the run, and we hurried through villages where the bewildered inhabitants did not know if they ought to laugh or cry.

I shall never forget this advance down the steep Piano slope, a neckbreaking descent. We passed the hotels at Lago di Misurina and Cortina, where we spent a holiday when we were children. We ran through Auronzo—and Titian's birthplace—Pieve di Cadore, crossed Longarone with its lovely wooden church—but we had no time even to glance at them. Then at last Udine—and it was difficult to realise that only a week earlier the town was deep in the Italian hinterland. Now we ate our dinner peacefully in our divisional officers' mess, and the line ran somewhere far to the south. . . .

My leave is due. Budapest: the victorious hero returns, to bask in the sunshine of fame. But the atmosphere is strange; it is charged with something unhealthy, a wild, erotic tension. The women and girls are perfectly crazy; so many of their men-folk are away, and those who remain blackmail them with the plea: "Death is always hanging over us; who knows what may happen to-morrow? let us at least live to-day! . . ." A dance mania springs up, such as the world has never seen before. Sensible people are shocked; they look on at this orgy with misgivings. Food is scarce, and strictly rationed; there is a black market, an epidemic of corruption. The peasants make money hand over fist, and spend it like water; buy pianos and other articles for which they have no use, and a barter trade begins which ends by leaving the urban population without bed-linen, or anything decent to wear. Money commences to lose its value, and is soon embarked on a descent which can only end in inflation and disaster.

The prophets are pessimistic in respect of the final outcome of the war. But we are winning, the soldiers cry!—Yes, is the retort, we are winning ourselves to death!

When I return to the Piave a new spectacle greets my eyes: the trees are decorated with hanged men. Polish legionaries and Czechs, who had taken up weapons against us, or Italian *francs-*

tireurs, who fired on our men from the windows, have been executed.

We hear strange rumours. That in 1916 the Germans, when they conquered Rumania, made a peace offer, which was rejected. There are whispers of a letter which was written in the spring of 1917 by Empress Zita's brother, Prince Sixtus of Bourbon-Parma, to the government of France, containing a proposal which was nothing more or less than high treason. One of our companies, serving on the Swiss frontier, brings newspapers which have been smuggled into Austria. They tell an amazing story : how a sealed railway carriage, with some Russian revolutionaries as passengers, was sent across Germany and through the Russian lines ; the conspirators having agreed to foment a political upheaval ; and that their leader, Vladimir Ilyich Ulianoff, better known as Lenin, was met at the border by his friends Kamenoff and Stalin. We read how the German High Command has brought about a ten days' revolt in the Czar's realm which is shaking the world to its very foundations. The Russian army has collapsed, and the Czar, they say, has been murdered.

Masses of our own prisoners of war, having been released, are returning from Siberia, and rejoining their regiments. They bring with them an epidemic of unrest, a new outlook on life. Slogans become fashionable which were never heard before ; Marx and Engels are cited, and many suggest that instead of fighting the enemy it would be better to cut a few throats at home.

Mess tins are thrown at our feet. We try to calm the men with soothing words and more drastic methods ; but to no avail. A last effort is made in the West, and on the Piave. This insane summer of 1918 ! The gloves come off at last ; both sides use gas quite freely, and start to bomb civilians methodically ; soft-nosed bullets are in order, the tanks make their appearance. We have all had enough of it. I am transferred to Judicaria, and thence to the "Seven Communes" ; not the peaceful villages in which my ancestors lived, but a hell in Southern Tyrol, bearing the same name. I have had enough, and while I am on leave in Vienna I try to pull a few strings. Only to get out of this ! We have had enough. The yellow veil begins to darken the sun again. There are subterranean rumblings ; the men begin to whisper among themselves : " God's warning finger ! "

I am taken out of the line to attend another course, and once more I find myself sitting in the solitude of the Dome of Trento.

Subdued rays of sunlight filter through the tall stained-glass windows, but still the lofty roof, lost in a semi-darkness, seems to reach the sky. A strange mixture of Romanic and Gothic motifs and styles, and the more recent Baroque, give it a huge and

slightly bizarre character, an oriental solemnity. As the fragrance of thousands of lilies blends with the wafts of incense, and the mustiness of ancient stone and woodwork, the heavy smell of old leather and velvet, with the faint acridity of brass, mingles in the stagnant air, a drowsy numbness steals over the senses.

Someone is playing the organ, extemporising in soft harmonies; no melody; just a succession of harmonious chords; a hand caressing the keyboard, idle as my wandering thoughts, that evoke an image, an emotion, only to release it and pass on to another.

The atmosphere soothes my mind, the tranquillity relaxes the cramp in which my soul lay bound, as the first warmth of spring comforts the body.

I had been sick at heart, having just suffered the first great disappointment of my life, which added to the sufferings and problems of the war. I needed the consolation and the quiet of solitude, that I might order my thoughts.

The Catholic Church had always a great appeal for me: its pomp, music, and colour, even its theatrical formalities attracted me; only its dogmatism, and the autocratic attitude of its ecclesiastical hierarchy, were distasteful to me and repelled me. But here there was hardly another soul; no priest, nothing to disturb the train of reflection. . . .

How restful is the old bench, how cooling are the stone walls, after the restlessness of the trenches, and how good is this soft music, when one comes from the bedlam of artillery fire, or the dancing mania of the hinterland!

What are we driving on to? What is going to happen to us, to me? What will be the end of all this murdering and killing—what will come when this war is over? The men are so bitter; they use such strange phrases. The older ones complain that their wives and children have become estranged from them during these long years of separation; they have found new lovers, other mates, better friends. The younger men are wondering, anxiously, how they will manage to settle down again to their desks and their jobs, after this adventurous life. They have had the command of grown men, some older than themselves; they are majors, or captains; or pilot officers; how will they like having to kowtow to a silly civilian, because he is their manager or employer?

Quo vadis? We have learned to kill; our moral convictions have been reshuffled; we have become less scrupulous in certain respects; lust and desire have come to the surface; old obligations, ties, and bonds have loosened. What will be the end of it?

There is that idealist Wilson and his Fourteen Points. He promises us a world with no more war; peace for ever and happiness for mankind. But still we are fighting. Are we all mad?

Or what of those new ideas in Russia, which postulate equal rights for all? Blood is still flowing there, as everywhere. What is wrong with *homo sapiens*?

An old peasant woman walks past me; her sad, empty eyes graze my face. A young woman follows her, pretending to pray, but she has a lascivious smile for a young, grinning soldier. . . . Ah, let's get into the fresh air. . . . If only I could go home!

But I am not the only one who says "Let us go home!" Others whisper the words; they are spoken aloud; they become a wild chorus: "Enough! Let us go home!" Whole regiments march over to the enemy: Poles, Czechs, Serbs, Croats. One discovers at daybreak that the flank is unprotected; a vital battery has gone. The old Habsburg Empire is crumbling; its components, nationality after nationality, are leaving it.

The Austro-Hungarian army is disintegrating. Its officers are far more democratic than the Germans; rather than warriors by vocation, they are simple servants of the State; hard-working men, for whom their job does not involve the Prussian conception of "honour"; but is rather a profession to be learned. And now they are beginning to give up. The Germans are defeated in the West. Their navy mutinies; so does the Austro-Hungarian; and no blood-bath, as organised by Admiral Horthy in Pola, no martial law in the cities, can check this avalanche of dissolution.

A few generals still believe in this mad business. Make an example! It is the old slogan. Shoot the rebels, hang them! But we are sick of playing the executioner; we want to go home.

Home? Have we a home? Does it still exist, or is it only a jumble of derelict houses, the paint peeling off the walls, a collection of neglected trains and trams, in which live and travel a mob of aimless people?

Home? Is there a home awaiting us tired, worn-out men? We want only a clean bed to sleep in; sleep, a little food, and peace; not this mad, dancing crowd of faithless lovers, lustful wenches, mad bacchantes. We want no politics; we are too tired to think; we want peace, peace and a quiet job. The cart has jumped the rails; we only want it back on the track. . . .

Are these cities our former homes? Vienna, where a once jovial people has turned into a cruel, raving multitude, who maltreat the "Herren Offiziere," tear off their badges and orders, beat up harmless civil servants, and break shop windows? Is this Budapest, formerly one of the most magnificent capitals of Europe; now a shabby, grey, lifeless town, with clusters of people hanging on to the few trams which are still running, and hungry crowds of men and women dressed half in uniform, half in civilian clothes?

Is this the once mighty Austro-Hungarian Empire? This

mad-house, where stones are thrown, and the people go hungry? Where the public services are continued only out of habit, as a steam-engine keeps on working for a while after the stokers have downed their shovels? Is this poor, tired-out, unorganised mob the army which held and defeated Italy, the Serbs, the Russians, the Rumanians? Or is it just a pack of exhausted animals, worn out by the chase, ready to drop without caring what fate is to befall it?

Is this the final result of that little punitive operation across the Save—that now we have all to starve, to live in darkness?

There was no answer to these questions. Who was there to give an answer?

On the ruins of the Habsburg monarchy new national States were built, with the assistance of the conquerors. A primitive, senseless jumble, which would have been more worthy of children playing a geographical game than of responsible statesmen.

Versailles and Trianon. . . . Experiments in pushing peoples about like so many chessmen, while the chance was missed, the chance of thousands of years, of putting Europe in order.

The newly-born Czech State was the first to find its feet. But even this democratic nation, under the leadership of one of the finest liberals who ever walked this earth, Thomas Masaryk, was doomed to fail. It blundered in its treatment of minorities; it gave the streets new names; it sent Czech civil servants to towns whose inhabitants had never spoken a Slavonic word; it created an artificial Czech atmosphere in order to mislead the Boundary Commission, that company of ignorantamuses.

Hungary? Only one-third of its former territory was left, and 45 per cent. of the population was compressed into this small area. Rumania received more of Hungary's territory than was left to the Magyars. How were they to exist?

Who cared—and who cared to ask whether the dismembered Austria would be able to survive? That hydrocephalous Vienna? If the people have no food, let them turn cannibal.

Is this all the victors can do for the world, and for themselves? What has happened to the promised Fourteen Points, and the half-crazy idealist who framed them? Has he gone to America, leaving the gigantic task to the conferences, commissions, and leagues, who now fill all the luxury hotels, palaces, and spas of Central Europe with sparkling uniforms and evening dresses, and amuse themselves?

Instead of uniting the helpless crowd of little nations, who would have agreed to any solution if a real leader had appeared, these

who had the power divided and fragmented a system already complex enough. They could easily have persuaded the conquered peoples to accept one common auxiliary language, to be taught in all the schools; for example a simplified English, a language neutral to all of them; but the opportunity was lost, despite the undiminished Anglomania of the Central European, and his respect for American institutions!

But Bulgarians, Poles, Rumanians, Magyars, Czechs, Slovaks, Serbs—all the nationalities in this powder-magazine were encouraged to become still more chauvinistic; to heap up dynamite for the next explosion. A little punitive expedition across the Save was transformed, in the end, into a punitive expedition against the whole of mankind; for the makers of "the peace" were preparing the next world-war.

Europe is in convulsions. What ails her? Socialism, Bolshevism, Spartacists, Volunteer-corps, Royalist putzches. . . . Charles IV attempts to occupy at least a small portion of Hungary; large enough to harbour himself, his family, the Crown of Habsburg and the regalia of St. Stephen: he fails. The Red and White terrors rage through the country; secret armies and semi-official military formations are recruited in Germany, Hungary, and Finland. They fight one another, slay and murder. Who cares?

In territories torn from the body of the former Dual Monarchy, wild irredentist movements spring up, inspired, not merely by chauvinism, but instigated and supported by the feudal landowners, whose vast domains were broken up by the political changes. The reactionary Magyar magnates, for example, after losing a large proportion of their property to Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Rumania, attempt to recover their former possessions by financing a "No! No! Never!" campaign. But this slogan is not really a protest against the new frontiers; it simply bewails the fact that these aristocratic gentlemen, not less dangerous to peace than the Prussian Junkers, have lost, with large portions of their estates, their feudal rights and overwhelming influence in Magyar affairs.

Similar feelings are cherished by the captains of industry, bankers, and big business men, who all join forces, with valuable assistance from the clergy, in an attempt to restore the old state of affairs. None of them have the interests of the peoples involved at heart: cold-blooded egoism is the only motive for their exertions.

On June 24, 1922, Walther Rathenau is assassinated, shot by young Nazis from a motor car. I hear a well-dressed German, who is asked by his little daughter why the flags are at half mast, explain: "It is only because they have killed that Jew" "He!"

What does it mean? Walther Rathenau, who saved Germany's war machine for years, by organising her supply of raw materials: one of the profoundest thinkers and most decent of human beings; the man who had urged the adoption of English as a universal tongue, recommending that the English speaking nations, in return, by way of recognition for the honour paid to their language by the rest of the world, should adopt the metric system . . . This man was a "swine" in the eyes of a Teuton?

But how did it happen that I heard this remark in Germany? Why had I left Hungary?¹ Is it worth the telling? Can one go on spinning the thread of family history while such questions as the safety of our children and the very existence of the new world which we intend to build, are at stake?

Should I waste your time by relating such unimportant details as, for example, my emigration from Germany to Britain, prompted by the German abuse of Rathenau, and the Anglomania which had been inculcated in my parents by the unhappy Count and the still more unfortunate Empress Elizabeth?

How it always surprises me when I hear my two sons having a gentlemanly argument in manner and language as if their great-great grandfather had not been a certain Wolf of Mattersdorf, but a Mr Smith or Jones, who had never left the British Isles! Or when my wrist-watch, bought twenty-seven years ago in the Váci-utca, that aristocratic Bond Street of Budapest, shows 2 p.m. British summer time as readily as it would indicate 14 00 hours on the Continent, while the civilised "Light Sussex" fowls in our back garden cackle not very differently from the savage little peasant hens in Hungary. There, when a guest arrives, the hostess just goes out to catch one of the birds, and the chicken-gulyás is soon ready.

I still remember the day when I came out of that watchmaker's shop and a tall guards officer stopped me to ask the way to a certain street. "Do you want to ride or walk?" I enquired. His reply: "Wild beasts walk, humans ride!" became a proverb in our family. But he never arrived at the address in question, for we made a day of this meeting, and soon picked up three more officers, with the camaraderie only possible among front-line soldiers on leave.

We sat in front of a coffee-house near the river, and created a little commotion by our guffaws, when a batch of tourists passed us on their way to the Buda hills. "Look, they are carrying a rucksack for pleasure! Can you believe it?"

¹ This story is told in a volume, *Insanity Abounding*, by the same author (Harmondsworth Press, Ltd, 1942)

Well, all this, perhaps, is not of any importance. . . .

Or should I explain how the little girl who once refused to play with me on the shore of the Millstadt See was one day to become my wife, although in the meantime she had been married to someone else? How Fate, which decreed that her family, while they moved from house to house, should always remain in our neighbourhood, made her the mother of my sons? Ought one to waste printer's ink on such trivialities as our simple, private lives when a world is ablaze?

Or should I repeat the story of the manner in which this second phase of the world-war came about—a story which has already been told so often that whole libraries are filled with the records?

The material events you have, I am sure, watched yourself. Perhaps from behind the then so safe bastion of Britain, towering majestically above the European turmoil, or even from America, where the dollars stood like a rock, while Frau Schulze, who had been taught to be thrifty, to save half-farthings, was compelled to pay milliards of marks, kronen, or zloty for an egg; and my father's family, like millions of others, could not buy so much as a box of matches with "the fortune with which they were so well provided."

Or it may be that you are among the unfortunates who were Austro-Hungarians by birth, and then became Czechs, later to be converted into "Reichsdeutsche," and even to have a capital J printed across their passports, as one brands calves or sheep; thereby becoming veritable outcasts, Ahasueruses, to find refuge at last as enemy aliens, in unfamiliar surroundings, amidst people who do not understand them?

Or shall I explain how right Wilhelm Wundt was, when he declared that any nation can go mad, if a sufficient number of lunatics are living in its midst?

Shall I argue that only a people of insane flagellants, of masochistic bedlamites, would impoverish themselves to the point of destitution, burn Heine's poems, and prohibit Mendelssohn's music? Only madmen would thus excommunicate the two most delightful of Germany's artists, would close their ears to the incidental music to "A Midsummer Night's Dream"—those melodies spun with a web of cobwebs and moonshine on a woof of happiness! Or to his great violin concerto. Or to "The Hebrides," even if they had never had the luck to see the storms raging against the rocky Scottish coast? Can you understand the Nazis, who have replaced their fine scientific periodicals, their literary magazines, filled with the writings of men like Thomas Mann and Stefan Zweig, by a pornographic *Stürmer*, edited by Julius Streicher, a man in whose existence one can hardly believe save on the hypothesis that

the soul of a mediaeval Nuremberg torturer has transmigrated into a contemporary body?

But it may well be that you are tired of history, which revolves in cycles, like a huge, multi-coloured roundabout, on which the riders, who emerge again and again, if they are not identical, at least resemble one another like twins?

Consider the Vienna Congress, for example, which continued for many months, to the accompaniment of fiddles and waltz tunes. Its representatives, recruited from the aristocratic *jeunesse dorée*, were not guided in their policy by principles, but by the gambler's instinct, the cocksure self-confidence of noblemen of long descent.

The chain of meetings, leagues and conferences that paved the road from Verdun to Stalingrad had also their accompaniment of musical instruments and dances. These assemblies of dreamers, amateurs, adventurers, humbugs, and confidence tricksters, were partly of a younger vintage, but they too listened to their own intuitions, and at the same time to the crazy "hot" syncopations of the saxophone. They danced the fox-trot, the Charleston, or the sentimental "blues," often to the very melodies to which their predecessors had moved in other measures, though their essential task has been the same: namely, to lull a new generation to sleep, to conjure up a sense of security.

One wanted the younger generation to forget how their fathers had gone from their school benches, their office desks, or their lathes and ploughs, to spend the best years of their lives in suffering and mud. To return, after the flower of humanity had been slaughtered, having learned only one thing: how to kill. When they came back, worn out, blood-stained, and sick at heart, longing only for a decent woman, a proper meal, a bath, and a clean shirt, the Clemenceaus, the Wilsons, the Lloyd Georges and their colleagues asked them not to worry, for everything would be put right; they were promised a paradise, a life really worth living. . . . But what awaited this unhappy generation, after all these promises, was, as you know, less a paradise than an economic mad-house, a political lunatic asylum, an oversexed *danse macabre*.

"Have confidence in the future!" said the benevolent saviours, and they drew sanitary cordons round the nations, popped them into larger or smaller compartments, and left them to stew in their own juice, to madden or murder one another.

The generals were replaced by dictators, the sergeant-majors by a strange hierarchy of civil servants, who remilitarised the demobilised world and turned its bicycle or pram factories into secret arsenals; and while the enemy was formerly in front, the peoples now found him at their backs and in their midst.

False prophets emerged, praising old devices as new political remedies. They were assisted by a press which camouflaged, behind its items of information and scraps of news, the ideas which its masters and shareholders held, or wanted others to accept. Side by side with the puffs of cigarettes, beer, patent medicines, and labour-saving soaps were other, disguised advertisements selling beliefs, or fallacies, lies, and a perverted philosophy, to people who eagerly lapped the unwholesome mixture.

The interpreters and adherents of the "isms" were more interested in hunting down the heretics who dared to doubt their dogmas, than in living up to their own teachings, or fulfilling the obligations accepted when these doctrines were adopted.

The Spartan ideal cropped up once more, donning the robes of the Hegelian philosophy, and adopting a new name: Totalitarianism. It made the State the absolute master, and not what it should be, a mechanism serving man. When this "ism" deteriorated still further it miscarried, and bore the monster Fascism.

This is only a stupendous barometer, indicating the colossal vacuum of economic rot, political decay and corruption; a gigantic hog's bladder expanding into the non-resistance created by the petty-minded selfishness which had been displayed at Versailles and afterwards, during the whole interval between the two phases of this latest thirty years' war.

Only a complete absence of vision, a lamentable lack of realism and a deficient sense of proportion could have resulted in the moral emptiness of this carnival of marionettes in their black, brown, and coloured shirts, justifying itself by professing faked ideas of sham patriotism, bogus chivalry, make-believe altruism, mock sociology, fraudulent public spirit, counterfeit philanthropy and catchpenny generosity.

The Führer and his gang of criminal psychopaths had not a single original idea between them, not even a bad one; they were simply brain parasites, who had crammed the thoughts of others into the rotten vessel of their own ideology, and had then injected the foul Nazi concoction into the receptive mind of the Germans, and of any other peoples who were not immunised against the toxin.

Adolf Hitler is neither a statesman nor a politician; he is no visionary, no true idealist, merely a crazy demagogue clown, playing a sinister pantomimic interlude in the Greek tragedy of European history.

His shrieks and yelps and bellows awakened the cataleptic Teutonic giant, whose exhausted body cumbered the world stage, and who now, in brute obedience, hurled himself into the massive, trampling, Grand Guignol melodrama produced by his masters, thus finally proving that GERmania is not a symbolic personality,

nor the name of a goddess, or a country, but a species of mental derangement.

Hitler's impresarios, the steel magnates, big business sovereigns, and international rulers of industry, were hoaxed themselves by his hocus-pocus academy of science, his bogus economic council, his Napoleon imitation, and his Great General Staff of Koeppenick captains.

The Nazis, with their disciples and imitators, the dupes and half-wits who believed in the reality of this wild-goose chase, this April fools' paradise, became in their lust for power an army of robbers running amok, who brought civilisation to the verge of ruin, and who, in pursuance of their plan for the Teutonic domination of the world, began to exterminate the rest of mankind. They have reared a generation of savage beasts of prey, have sterilised whole nations, and have devised a new operation for extirpating the conscience.

They were aided and abetted by Janus-faced reactionaries, naïve "appeasers," and other admirers, including those innocent sight-seers who, on returning from "beautiful" Germany, imported the germs of the pestilence as rats carry those of the plague.

Between them they have turned our globe into a gigantic playground of insane morons, and Europe into a raving children's corner, above which, dangerously dangling, pivoted on the smouldering post of Danubia, rocks the Balance of Power, like a cruciform see-saw.

Upon it, swerving and swaying, bobbing up and down, are here Russia and China, there Germany, Japan, and Italy; now France is down, while the English-speaking Union is high in the air; and, clinging to them all, rushing from one to the other, is a howling multitude of little people, pulling here, pushing there, jumping on to derelict swings, or sliding down broken switchbacks to disaster, while the politicians and diplomatists play a dishonest ping-pong or dance a lunatic can-can.

And looking on, helpless, like bewildered old nannies, are the neutrals, and a few dreaming idealists, all frightened out of their wits, and regarded as marplots by the enthusiasts of the insane fait, who are imperilling not only the lives of these few onlookers but the health and happiness of helpless millions.

One would imagine that humanity should by now have grown out of its first childhood, and that it was high time to end this hysterical tomfoolery, to stop the deadly round games of these demented morons: the hopscotch of financiers, the economic blindman's buff, the political musical chairs, which are surely just as much out of date as the ring-a-ring-a-roses of romantic tradition and convention, or the oranges-and-lemons of the old school ties.

The leading-strings by which the vested interests are still at-

tempting to restrain us must now be discarded, and mankind, no longer in its infancy, must step boldly on a road only artificially obstructed by old wives' tales, that have nothing to do with real religion, with stories that only pretend to be history, and pseudo-scientific fables that clog the mind.

Certain wars have always been blamed on to one or the other nation, although in reality each clash was the natural sequence of its forerunner, which at all times had spread far and wide the dry rot of immorality and corruption. The victors usually treated the defeated with a cruelty similar to the methods used in mediaeval lunatic asylums for "healing" inmates, and implanted revengefulness of the most explosive kind.

The Hundred-, thirty-, seven-years' war, or under whatever title they were fought out, used as a pretext religious conflicts, difference in outlook on life, while in truth imperiousness and selfish commercial interests hid behind them.

Again and again the bodies of the young were broken, the hearts of the old tortured, whilst their souls were kept in servitude by a dogmatic church, by reactionaries who introduced a form of education bringing about hero-worship, like the Napoleon-adoration so typical in so-called good Europeans, and who joined forces to create the World-State of Hypocristan.

The pendulum of historical events may swing from the Nile Valley to Rome or Byzantium, move North and South, from East to West again, touch Paris, London, Vienna in turns, and, never at rest, go even from Wall Street to Moscow.

Every period had some "strong men" and "mighty women," Darius, Cleopatra, Suleiman, Napoleon, the names are legion, but to one's great surprise they all found partners in this game of shifting a centre of political gravity from one place to another.

The opponents were often very strange bedfellows. Frederick II, a woman-hater, had to confront in an age of feminine rule when the Kings of France were only the pawns of their wives or mistresses, Empress Elisabeth of Russia and Maria Theresa. A very antisemitic Bismarck faced Disraeli, while William the Twaddler's brutality was countered by Edward VII's masterly strokes without much talking.

Still, even the best did basically all the same; they shifted the storm-point for a while from one corner of the globe to another, without being able to overcome the danger for good. Men of learning and art, who were much more competent to plan the structure of human society, became mere understrappers in this bloody game of *condottieres* and other pet children of Mars.

To end all wars dangerous toys must be taken from the hands of the megalomaniacs of power, the manufacture of weapons must be internationally controlled, and the terrible state affairs must be

ended, under which private profit can be made by the multiplication of these instruments of destruction

Machine guns handled as frivolously as children's rattles, tanks serving as hobby horses for irresponsible Peter Pans, gas and incendiary bombs, grenades and other explosive playthings, should be relegated to our museums, exhibited side by side with the crude weapons of the Stone Age, or the mediaeval instruments of torture of which humanity has learned to be ashamed

We must also exterminate the unsound doctrine that the only honourable occupation is to be a soldier, who by being disciplined into an automaton becomes a mere killing machine

Or shall the young men, whose predecessors captured the Bastille, fought on the barricades in 1848, and stormed Verdun, and who themselves will win this war, live only to realise that their elders are losing the peace and the future for them? Will our children, if ever the day dawns when they return home, blood stained and weary, having known and survived Dunkirk, El Alamein, Stalingrad, Sicily, Anzio, Normandy, be disillusioned by the same experiences as those that awaited their fathers?

There is something unsound and menacing at the roots of our world. The riches of the earth, the coal, metal, and oil, have been exploited until we can foresee the danger-level of exhaustion, we can indeed hardly afford to squander them in further wars. The soil that provides us with our harvests may soon be carried away by the winds if we continue to rob it of real values, and replace them only by chemicals

How much more time is left to mankind for putting its house in order and reconditioning its vital machinery? To grease the squeaking pulleys, tighten the rattling cog-wheels, re set the clattering levers?

It may be that the last chance is coming our way on the roundabout of history. We cannot risk missing it by merely talking, drawing up plans, preparing reports, and meeting in conferences, without really implementing our reforms. We, who found the money for the destruction of whole countries, the devastation of considerable areas of the earth, and were not too sentimental to smash the monuments of thousands of years of patient effort by our bombs, which were so ubiquitous that the very blackbirds and starlings have learned to imitate their whistle, must also be able to provide the means to carry out what our plans, reports and conferences recommend

Not all changes should be left to wars and revolutions, to the ideas born of the desperation of Spartacus, struggling in the depths, or the crazy dreams of Icarus, who flew too high and burnt his wings. It would be more worthy of civilised people to plan our route methodically, and, when once we have realised our past mistakes, to apply the radical remedy.

We must have seen by now that it is hopeless to build on old, cracked foundations, with obsolete material. The re-drawing of maps has been tried so often that it is high time to abandon this futile expedient, which results in customs barriers, dumpings, and minority grievances, and leads to further conflicts. Our problems, including the entanglements of Central Europe, cannot be solved by conservative remedies; only a radical operation, planned on a global basis, will cure the ills from which the world is suffering.

We have experienced, twice within a generation, the results of inoculating adolescent minds with the toxins of chauvinism. The whole system of our education has to be changed. It was taken from clerical hands, from mediaeval and monastic schools, to be placed in the charge of men who were full of false illusions as to the value of the classics, and who, by thrusting science, and above all, political and social knowledge, into the background, brought about a general intellectual decadence. It is the first task of education to enlarge the mind, to ensure that the young citizens of the world will not only find their own place, but will also realise that others want to live and enjoy the same rights. Nations cannot be made politically-minded by forcing adults to go to the poll, just as one cannot implant religion by means of compulsory church parades, or obligatory teaching of divinity in our schools.

One has to enlighten the young first, to arouse their interest in their own affairs; then they will soon find their level. Humanity cannot continue to be divided into right and left wings; the fundamental interests of all men are the same; and a bird can fly only by using all its pinions in harmonious movement.

In the future, when we read in the newspapers that millions are starving in China, shall we only remember that we have an appointment for lunch? Will descriptions of Armenian and Jewish massacres serve merely as a hint to visit the cinema and see the current news-reels, and will the sinking of a torpedoed battleship simply remind us to book our seaside apartments in time?

If we really mean what we say when we talk of reconstruction and a new world, then there must be individual sacrifices; our reforms must not be like those of the people who say: "At present, the majority of those who use the roads drive on the right; if they are willing in future to drive on the same side as ourselves, on the left, then we have nothing to say against the introduction of universal traffic regulations!"

Humanity is ready for radical changes. If the route is shown to us we shall all be ready to follow it. But the men and women who point the way must have the power of conviction, and must live up to the ideas which they preach.

The League of Nations, the concrete embodiment

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of outstanding brains, an institution in which many millions of people believed, had not the slightest chance of proving its vitality. It was let down from the very beginning by the so-called Great Powers, who merely obeyed their own selfish desires and commercial instincts. We cannot say that it failed. Again, the ideal of Pan-Europe has not failed, for it was never tried out in earnest. This ideal is quite unrelated to the ambitions of the present German régime, of the leaders of a people who in the near future will be found to suffer from a general loss of memory, and eager to prove that it was always 100 per cent. anti-Nazi.

The League of Nations and Pan-Europe should only perform the task of preparing the way for the World State, which may now seem the dream of a cranky Utopian; but wireless, the X-rays, the aeroplane, television, and radio-activity would have seemed mere fantasies half a century ago.

Our problems, such as the introduction of a universal auxiliary tongue, and an international currency, and the acceptance of a simple system of weights and measures, with many others—are mere child's play compared with the obstacles which confronted *homo sapiens* on his way from the flint arrow-heads to Flying Fortresses, from the family tribe to the U.S.A. or the U.S.S.R.

But if we compare the progress made in other directions, we have to confess that the manner in which we still solve our social and political troubles is even more primitive than in the darkest days of barbarism, when people could not have been expected to know better.

We may be proud of the fact that from a primitive anthropoid, within a few thousand years, there was born a being who could write the scrolls of the Law and the poems of Homer, and had vision enough to prophesy that one day swords would be turned into ploughshares. It is our own fault that this hour has not yet struck; but let us not delay it.

Neither the writings of these prophets, nor great-grandfather's portrait need be relegated to a dusty attic; they may still adorn the most modern of flats, and are not inconsistent with the most up-to-date way of life. But we should not remember our ancestors only, let us above all keep the future generations in mind. Let us hope that when they inspect the last passport ever issued, preserved in some museum as a unique historical curiosity—a document which classified a human being and labelled him, as Linnaeus classified and labelled plants—they will have no reason to pity us, as one pities the blind for the loss of their sight, for our lack of vision, which has made life so difficult for us and for them.

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